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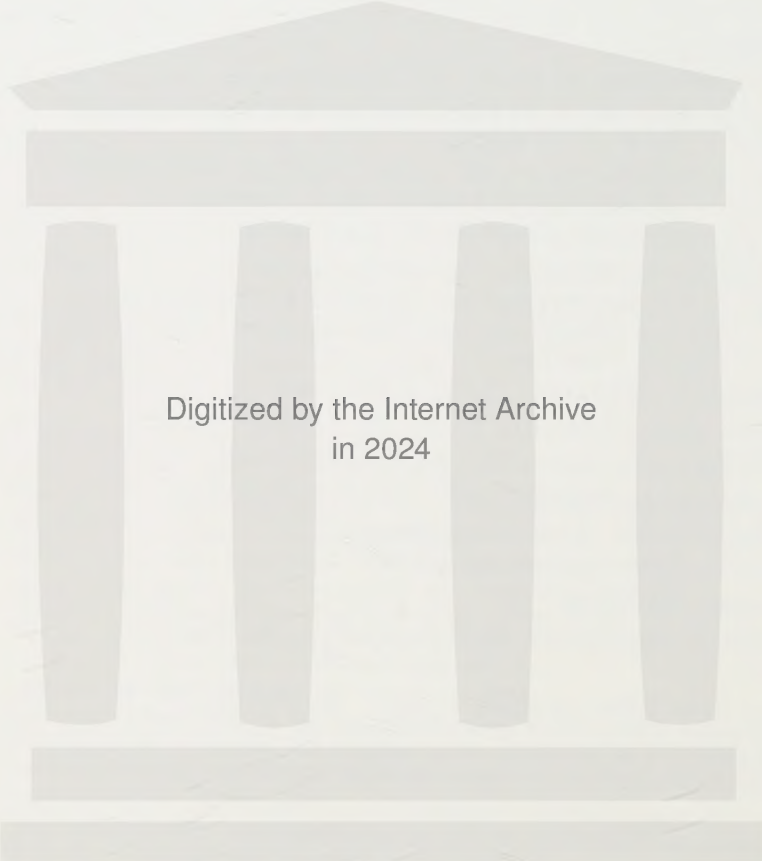
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DUBLIN MAGAZINE

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OLD SONG RE-SUNG

By Padraic Colum

“ Below there are white-faced throngs,
Their march is a tide coming nigher ;
Below there are white-faced throngs,
Their faith is a banner flung higher ;
Below there are white-faced throngs ;
White swords they have yet but red songs ;
Place and lot they have lost—hear you not
For a dream you once dreamed and forgot.”

“ But a dream has a life of its own,
And the wizard seas it can cross ;
A dream has a life of its own ;
It comes like the albatross ;
A dream has a life of its own ;
From my feet to your feet it has flown.
And you, you victorious,
That wild, live thing will lose.”

ELEGY IN A PRESBYTERIAN BURYING-GROUND

R. N. D. Wilson

(In Memoriam J. Lyle Donaghy)

I.

The meeting-house is not what it used to be
Since the new church was built,
But the white-washed walls still make a pleasant setting
For the ash-trees at the gate,
And the round windows—though the red panes are gone—
Have dignity upon the simple wall,
And the door, level to the grass, without steps or porchway
Might open yet to all.

II.

The white pavilions of gateposts, stained with damp
And with rusty iron (where the gate had hung)
Still point the way to the stable, where horse and pony
could nuzzle,
Till the second sermon was done,
And the elders came out to draw the shafts of the traps up,
And load their wives and children into the well,
With their bibles and their black dresses and farmyard faces.
Farewell, farewell !

III.

I could have buried a poet here under these hedges
And left him happy. Son of the manse he was,
And drew his integrity from these white-walled precincts,
His rhetoric from his father's pulpit phrase.
Though he himself had made his Covenant elsewhere,
An older, darker and more troubled one,
With the certainty of a leaf, of a stone, of a dewdrop,
He knew his Election.

IV.

He would remember the nooks where the first primroses
 Christened the moss, and the freckled thrush would
 come

Mating its melody with his own grave elegiacs
 To turn a Scottish psalm.

And whenever the men stood up, with their backs to the
 pulpit,

Hiding their faces from Jehovah's glare,
 He would be with them, though he prayed another
 And more contentious prayer.

V.

There are some townlands more in league with heather,
 And the dark mountain, than with fields where men
 Have sowed and planted ; and his rebel spirit
 Still sought the farthest glen,
 Whose Sabbath was a solitude, whose gossip
 Was the wind's whisper. There he broke the bread
 Of meaning, in a silence, that his verses
 So well interpreted.

VI.

Yet he would grieve with me for the dereliction
 That has overtaken this place,
 For he cared for it. And the burying-ground beside it
 Held many of his race.

He would not be surprised to find it sadly neglected,
 Who was himself so negligent of fame.
 And I ?

—I would be proud to be the stoneyard mason
 Who had incised his name.

LOOKING OVER THE LAWN—WINTER AFTERNOON AT POLESDON LACEY (TO DIANA)

By L. Aaronson

What skill there was in living evocation
Died in the sunless emptiness of space,
Whose images were all its own creation,
Known to itself and to their own tried place.
Morning had been the moment's cold elation,
When, out of spurious summer, bodies cry
Challenge to winter ; and the sun's ovation
Came large through lucid trees, strict on the sky.

Then I had thought I'd try the season out,
Till I was so familiar with my Time
All would be mine as rhyme escapes by rhyme.
But now the landscape's face has turned about
And meditates the moon I cannot see,
And I am empty with mortality.

O COUNTRY PEOPLE

By John Hewitt

O Country people, you of the hill farms,
huddled so in darkness I cannot tell
whether the light across the glen is a star,
or the bright lamp spilling over the sill,
I would be neighbourly, would come to terms
with your existence, but you are so far ;
there is a wide bog between us, a high wall.
I've tried to learn the smaller parts of speech
in your slow language, but my thoughts need more
flexible shapes to move in, if I am to reach
into the hearth's red heart across the half-door.

You are coarse to my senses, to my washed skin ;
 I shall maybe learn to wear dung on my heel,
 but the slow assurance, the unconscious discipline
 informing your vocabulary of skill,
 is beyond my mastery, who have followed a trade
 three generations now, at counter and desk ;
 hand me a rake, and I, at once, betrayed,
 will shed more sweat than is needed for the task.

If I could gear my mind to the year's round,
 take season into season without a break,
 instead of feeling my heart bound and rebound
 because of the full moon or the first snowflake,
 I should have gained something. Your secret is pace.
 Already in your company I can keep step,
 but alone, involved in a headlong race,
 I never know the moment when to stop.

I know the level you accept me on,
 like a strange bird observed about the house,
 or sometimes seen out flying on the moss
 that may tomorrow, or next week, be gone,
 liable to return without warning
 on a May afternoon and away in the morning.

But we are no part of your world, your way,
 as a field or a tree is, or a spring well.
 We are not held to you by the mesh of kin ;
 we must always take a step back to begin,
 and there are many things you never tell
 because we would not know the things you say.

I recognise the limits I can stretch ;
 even a lifetime among you should leave me strange,
 for I could not change enough, and you will not change ;
 there'd still be strata neither'd ever reach.
 And so I cannot ever hope to become,
 for all my goodwill toward you, yours to me,
 even a phrase or a story which will come
 pat to the tongue, part of the tapestry
 of apt response, at the appropriate time,
 like a wise saw, a joke, an ancient rime
 used when the last stack's topped at the day's end,
 or when the last lint's carted round the bend.

THE ROOM UPSTAIRS

By Austin Clarke

FOR many years I could never hear without a momentary feeling of uneasiness the name of Shakespeare mentioned by anyone. The very syllables had a sinister ring for me because of the dread that name caused me in childhood. There was an empty room at the top of our house and on the wall, between the fireplace and the window, almost hidden in the gloom, hung a small portrait in oils. Dim and yellowed by time, that picture showed the head of a man of strange appearance, for he had long hair and below his pointed beard was some kind of wide collar brim. His face was melancholy and yet it always seemed to me that there was a sneer upon those bearded lips. I cannot remember when that portrait first stirred my curiosity, but one day I asked the name of the man and I was told, in jest or ignorance, that it was Shakespeare. The very name was foreign and had an inimical sound—who could be this moody stranger shaking a spear when he was angry? Children rarely look up when they are playing with toys on the floor, for they are too busy with their own imaginings, but one day, when I had strayed into that vacant room and was amusing myself, I happened to glance towards the portrait and saw, to my astonishment, that the eyes of the man were watching me. I turned away, then looked up, and once more his eyes met mine. I got to my feet and, as I did so, those eyes turned to watch every movement I made. I backed towards the door and that look still followed me, half mournful, half accusing. I did not tell anyone what had happened but I did not venture into that room again for more than a few seconds at a time except when I was with grown-ups. Emboldened by their company, I learned to play a fearful but exciting game. I moved slowly here and there about the room, knowing that wherever I went, those eyes followed me. I pretended not to look, I talked to my elders, then swung around sharply. I was still being watched. That searching gaze was always the same, so melancholy and accusing that I began to feel a sense of guilt, began to wonder what evil I could have committed. Guilt and fear mingled in my mind and I was certain, because of his name, that the stranger was treacherous, that his anger could be terrible when it was aroused. Sometimes, greatly daring, I crept up the stairs and opened the door very quietly, very quickly, and peeped in. Every time I did so, those eyes were looking straight at me.

But soon that daylight game of hide-and-seek had dire consequences. At night, before I went to sleep, I could not help thinking of that portrait in the empty room upstairs, for I was certain by now that it was alive. The faint glow of the altar light in the colza bowl was powerless to protect me from the mystery of the room upstairs. Stories of witches, ogres and magicians were fearful enough, but they were remote and, when I thought of the picture books from which they emerged, my anxiety could be dispelled. But this danger was different, for there were only two short flights of stairs between it and me. Children can enact in their little way the primary myths, find for themselves the ancient ritual of fear. So, night after night, my mind was drawn in obedient horror towards that room upstairs. It had become the forbidden chamber of legend, dreadful in darkness, and I was as powerless to resist it as Bluebeard's youngest wife when she turned the key in the lock. Were it not for the childish alarms which all of us remember so well, we would forget the power of our earliest imaginings, forget those first years when the mind seemed to part so readily from the body. Night after night I thought that I was actually climbing those two flights of stairs, compelled by the presence of that man in the frame. But the moment I got to the door of the forbidden room, the real struggle began. It is easy to forget not only the workings of our early imagination, but also the power of the will when we first discover its use, that determination shown by children when they are crossed or in the sulks. The struggle between my will and imagination was a mighty one. I seemed to be dashing down the stairs, but in a second or two, found myself on the top landing again. I fought my way back, step by step, a score of times, down those stairs. I raced, scrambled, slithered, but in the end my will always won and I was back in safety, my head under the bedclothes.

A night came, however, when my will failed me and I was drawn across the threshold into that forbidden room. I found myself in utter darkness and a piercing shriek must have echoed throughout the whole house, for in an instant my father was rushing up the stairs. I was really there in the room because I had walked in my sleep. But that defeat or dividing of the will proved in itself a victory: the shock broke the spell and I was no longer summoned at night by the man called Shakespeare.

It was not until long after that I discovered the secret of the picture. Art critics tell us that occasionally when the nose and

other features in a portrait are out of drawing or insufficiently emphasised, the attention of the spectator is directed immediately towards the eyes and this optical illusion occurs. The effect seems to have been discovered in the Byzantine period and became so well known in the Middle Ages that it was used by religious painters for purposes of religious edification. Nicholas of Cusa refers to the novelty and in his tract, *De visione Dei*, set down in the latter half of the fifteenth century, describes a picture of this kind :

Place it anywhere, say on the north wall of your Oratory ; stand before it in a half-circle, not too close, and look at it. It will seem to each of you, whatever the position from which he looks, that it is as if he, and he alone, were being looked at. . . . Then let a brother, fixing his gaze upon the icon, move towards the west, and he will find that the glance of the icon moves ever with him ; nor will it leave him if he returns to the east. He will marvel then at this motion without locomotion.

Such spiritual exercises were not mine and I fancy that the lay picture which afflicted me in childhood was but a freakish copy made by a careless or indifferent painter. It gave me a bewildering sense of guiltiness but that was all.

When we grow up, we learn to control our fears and, in doing so, can often borrow unsuspected gifts from them. Many years later that upper room was to prove a refuge from alarms and excursions of a very different kind. Fear is certainly dramatic and that is why, unfortunately, the violence of war appeals to us despite ourselves. Violence is rapid, though its results may last for generations ; so the noise and ordered confusion, the rattle of lorries and armoured cars, disappear for a while until all that is furious comes back and war starts again. That is why I remember, as in a dream, the night when I sat in great misery, a solitary prisoner in a Black-and-Tan lorry instead of being in that room upstairs. It happened in this way. My family was residing at the time outside Dublin, but the house in which we had lived formerly was still unsold, and, for convenience sake, a chair and a stretcher bed had been left in that top back room. On this night I had been with a woman friend and had forgotten all about the curfew, for in those days of ambush, raid and reprisal, it is surprising how often the timid failed to notice the time. There was indeed no Tocsin or Curfew Bell to announce the hour when all had to remain indoors : it came

suddenly and there was a deathly silence in the streets. I had to reach the north side of the city without being arrested, and as it was quite late, I decided that it would look less suspicious if I kept to the main streets. Hurrying past the darkened houses, I could only hear the echo of my own footsteps. St. Stephen's Green was bright under the moon, the tram rails gleamed like the steel of bayonets, and beyond the electric standards were the wintry branches of the trees. But Grafton Street was full of shadowy shop-corners and I went cautiously in the middle of the road. So far I seemed to be the only late-goer that night and when I got to College Green, I must have glanced at the clock above the gate of Trinity College, for I can remember clearly that it was almost midnight. I stood, listening for the ominous sound of lorries in the distance, but all was silent. As I hurried on, my hopes increased, but not for long ; when I came towards O'Connell Bridge I saw the first patrol. Very humbly I approached the Officer in command and told him my tale of forgetfulness. He waved me sternly on and I felt that he was sending me towards my fate although O'Connell Street, as far as I could see, was quite empty. But when I got to Nelson Pillar I stopped again, for, at the corner of Earl Street, strolling up and down by himself, whistling cheerfully as he twisted an enormous Colt revolver, was an auxiliary. He was handsome, tall, his tam o' shanter set at a rakish angle and, despite my anxiety, I could not help admiring the recklessness of this midnight whistler. It seemed to me that, as he swaggered there, he was making of himself a deliberate draw for any sniper who chanced to be lurking in the shadows of the narrow street. So with a double fear in my mind, I came towards this young man whose mirth was more alarming than the sternness of the patrol at the Bridge. To my surprise, he nodded pleasantly, listened with sympathy, but told me that the main patrol might not let me pass. I turned and saw beyond the Pillar a lorry and nearby, about a dozen Black-and-Tans. I was halted, my excuses failed, and a squat truculent-looking fellow marched me over to the empty lorry. I climbed in and sat down, feeling that I was doomed. Frantically through my mind hurried all the stories of atrocities which I had heard of : I remembered only too well the newspaper accounts of prisoners shot while trying to escape and, like everyone else, I knew what that grim euphemism meant. I tried to think that my fears were exaggerated, that all would be well, that I would have to spend merely a few hours in a

barrack cell. But it was in vain that I tried to deceive myself. The sentinel remained motionless beside the lorry ; ten yards away the Black-and-Tans were standing with their loaded weapons. They scarcely moved : patiently and in silence they were waiting there for more victims. Mercilessly the minutes passed and then fear, as it chilled, brought me its last gift, a moment of poetic inspiration. I leaned over the side of the lorry and questioned my terrible guardian in a simple tone. " Do you think there'd be a chance of a cup of tea when we get to the Barracks " He looked up at me in amazement. " Tea ! " he exclaimed. " Yes, I've not had a meal or anything for hours." " Neither have I," he muttered gruffly. I expressed great sympathy with him and suddenly he began to tell me of his many grievances. In a few minutes we were quite friendly. " I'll see what I can do for you "—he left me, and went over to the officer in charge. " He says you can go," said my deliverer, when he returned, " but keep to the left of Rutland Square, there may be another patrol on this side of it."

Full of joy I hurried along, for in less than ten minutes I would be safe in that room which I had feared so much in childhood. Already in my imagination, as I turned the corner, I was watching the moonlight shining through the window, thinking with amusement of that strange oil painting which had seemed alive. I could see the sneer on the lips and those melancholy, accusing eyes. Was it really a portrait of Shakespeare or of some unknown man And where had it vanished ? Suddenly I heard a whisper. Someone was calling me in a cautious tone and I looked towards the dark alley on my left. A couple of young fellows, crouching in a doorway there, were beckoning to me excitedly. As they did so, I heard the clattering of footsteps and saw in the distance three Black-and-Tans coming towards me in the middle of the road. Beyond them was the gloomy edifice known to all the children of the neighbourhood as the Black Church, and striding along between shadow and moonlight, these new enemies seemed even more formidable than those who had let me pass. My former home was only around the corner but it might have been in the next world. I felt that my luck had been too good to last and, to add to my difficulties, there was the problem of those two lads. As quietly and rapidly as I could, I murmured to them that they were liable to be shot at sight if they lurked there or ran down the lane, and so persuaded them to come with me. The Black-and-Tans cuffed the pair and sent each home to bed with a kick—but they let me pass less painfully.

A few minutes later I had reached that empty house on the north side of the city. I fumbled with the latch door key, then my hand was on the banisters, my foot on the stair. This time there was no struggle between my will and imagination, but I stopped to listen on the last lobby. Far away in the city I could hear the sound of shots. A moment later I was in the room upstairs.

AN INTERPRETATION OF GRIMM'S FAIRY-TALES

By Arland Ussher and Carl von Metzradt

2. THE GREATEST FAIRY-TALE

THE story of the Juniper Tree—both by its perfection of form and richness of symbolism—is surely the greatest of all fairy-tales. It conforms—almost—to the Classical unities of place and number of personages, and the characters fall naturally into a significant pattern, repeating the ancient hierarchies of chess and playing-cards. Further, its central theme, the Tree whose berries are eaten by the mother, whose roots are fertilised by the bones of the son, whose leaves and branches—in a Pentecostal wind and flame—engender the sweet-singing bird, combines in a familiar symbolism all the elements of man's story. The evergreen juniper is—it is scarcely necessary to say—the tree of Juno, the Great Goddess, linked (long ages before the discovery of the beverage of Geneva) with the generative rhythms of the woman; it is the German *Wachholder* or *Queckholder*—the awakening, quickening, rejuvenating tree. It is under the dark tree, amidst the gleaming snow, that the mother in the tale stands paring an apple; and, as she cuts her finger and the blood-drops fall on the snow, she prays—like the mother in *Schneewittchen*—for a child that shall be white and red—cold as beauty and radiant as life—like the snow and the blood. It is felt that she prays to the tree—to the universal Life that rises in the unity of desire and bends and fruits in the duality of good and evil. Her prayer is heard and, as the year increases, the germinal life within her increases, and she partakes of the berries of the tree

as in the archetypal Communion, the intermixture of perishable things, and as she eats them her separate life dwindles and she dies after giving birth to a son—that son who is to reverse the vegetative process by himself being eaten, as it were, and re-quickened by the Tree. The wife is buried beneath the tree—like the invisible world buried in the tomb of the visible—and in due course the husband marries again—as man, losing innocence, enters the second great phase, the phase of law and rationalism. By this second marriage the father has a daughter, Marlenchen,—his son, however, has no name in the story, for, like the ineffable God of the Old Testament, he is no more than the destined heir, and he has not yet received a character. The father is man, wived by Eternity and Time as if balanced between two darknesses, but possessing a little patch of light in each—the two beams of spiritual and corporal vision ; but the daughter seems to us the more real of the two, as the things of sense, though further from us than the creations of the mind, seem to have more content and solidity. The stepmother is jealous of the son—the father's link with the buried and unseen Other,—as Matter, not content with giving birth to her own children, wages perpetual war against the children of Mind—those “ spirits of the twilight ” as a German phrase describes the angels. Jealousy, indeed, is the passion which is inseparable from Life, Life which is always at a disadvantage against the Eternity of the non-living (Kierkegaard's “ in the wrong before God ”), Life which—in passing—is always *losing* something ; Life is forever poisoned by the attempt to “ live up to ” the static perfection which is Death. So one day Marlenchen begs her mother for an apple, and the mother takes her to a heavy-lidded chest to give it to her ; but she bethinks herself, and bidding the girl wait, tells her that her brother too must have one when he returns from school. She offers him the apple as soon as he enters, looking at him with a strange look ; he accepts in surprise and bewilderment, but as he bends over the chest to take it she slams down the lid, severing his head from his shoulders. It is the Eden legend, which formed the first panel, so to speak, of our triptych—the story of the Mother—here repeated as a prologue in the second—the story of the Son, as the Son of Man himself was tempted. The apple is the German *übel* (ill) as *melos* is *malus* ; it is most probably connected with Apollo, the fallen Lucifer—the self-enclosed circle of Day ; the apple, as has been said, brought discord by Adam, by Paris, by Newton (it may

be added, by Cézanne); it is the fabled fruit which was fair without, ashes within. It is by assimilation to the environment through the act of nutrition that hereditary virtue is in the first place mixed and adulterated; the son, tired of abstract studies in the "school," wishes to make sensuous contact with his world—as did the modern "Faustian" man at the commencement of the Renaissance-era—and thus slips into the power of the stepmother—the mechanicism of civilisation; in the gesture of grasping the promised fruit he literally "loses his head"—the ancestral balance of intuitive wisdom. To return to our narrative, the artful woman replaces the boy's head on the trunk, ties a handkerchief round the neck, and sets him on a chair with the apple in his hand; then she tells Marlenchen to go to him and ask him for the apple he holds, and to cuff him if he refuses it to her. She does so and the head falls off, but the mother soothes her for this seeming catastrophe, bidding her tell no one and she will make black-puddings of her brother for the father's evening meal; she cuts him into strips which she throws upon the pan, and the uncomprehending Marlenchen salts them with her tears. We note here that the natural senses (personified by Marlenchen) are raised by the conviction of guilt to the grace which intuition (or the son) enjoys by birthright; for pity is only divine if it is activated by a sense of mystical guilt and remorse, and Christ—the sinless—feels not pity but love. Remorse is the salt of our daily bread, of the materialised substance of God, like the seas that circle the earth, like the unresting blood in our frames; it is through remorse that we know nostalgia, as from the blood comes consciousness,—blood, it might be said, itself implies blood-guiltiness. At evening the father returns and the black-puddings are served up to him for his dinner; and, in spite of his anxiety at the absence of his son, he is surprised to feel his spirits rising while he devours this Saturnian feast. Marlenchen however will not be comforted, and, as soon as the "Abendmahl" is over, she collects the bones of the murdered brother, ties them in her best scarf, and lays them under the sacred tree—another Joseph of Arimathaea, another Isis collecting the limbs of Horus. And as she rests beneath the tree, her sorrow turns to a strange joy, the tree is stirred and agitated and breaks into flames at its top, and out of the flames rises a brightly-coloured bird—like a Phoenix out of the ashes, like the divine voice from the burning bush. The conception of the child took place in midwinter, but the birth

of the bird of the Spirit occurs—it is emphasised—in bright sunshine ; Christmas and Whitsun are festivals of the earth and the sun, the imprisoned and the liberated light, but Easter—the great movable feast of the calendar—is the festival of the mutable moon, forever appearing and vanishing between earth and heaven, like the male-principle in our story between the rival spouses—or like the vacillating Peter in Leonardo's Last Supper, between Judas and John. And now the bird flies to a goldsmith's, a cobbler's and a miller's—where twenty millers are at work, as it were the commoners in this soul's-pageant ; and outside the door of each she sings a song, known in various forms to the folk-literatures of most countries—" My mother she killed me, my father he ate me. . . ." We remember that in all folklore the goldsmith is the artistic man, the cobbler the logical—usually indeed the village-atheist ; whereas the miller is commonly the rogue—he represents in fact the man of Will, his grinding-stone is the cruel weight of the Ego, and the mill is the prototype of the factory of our industrialism. All are charmed by the bird's song, and—in childish fashion—beg her to " do it again " ; this she will do only in return for gifts—a golden chain, a pair of red shoes, and lastly the millstone, which she thrusts her neck through and carries away as lightly as if it were a ruff, as Will is borne by the pure-souled. One sees the three stages in the assimilation of a new truth—the aesthetic sentimental appeal of the ring, the utilitarian serviceability of the shoes, the irresistible compelling weight of the stone. The bird, returning with these acquisitions, sings before the door of the father's house ; the father, running out, receives the chain around his neck—Marlenchen, following, receives the shoes, in which she leaps and dances—and the stepmother, who experiences the supernatural brightness of the day as a burning anguish, rushes from the house in her turn, only to be flattened by the millstone amid more smoke and flames. Then the whole strange dream—which, one is made to feel, Marlenchen dreamt beneath the Juniper Tree—dissolves, and the resuscitated son stands once again among his family ; only the evil stepmother has vanished. It is that reintegration of personality which Christianity symbolises under the Resurrection of the Body, when this natural universe shall shrivel away in flame—that End of the World which each religion has conceived after its fashion, but which will always remain a mystery for materialistic science. The family return into the house, and

sit down again merrily to table. The story seems unfinished ; for to *this* story there really *is* no ending except the words of the doxology—" World without end." The Pagan triad of Mother, Father and Child has changed into the Christian triad of Father, Son and Maid, and the unholy Stepmother who mediated the change was but Illusion. It was necessary that Guilt should come, that its daughter, the healing Pity, should also come, and the new trinity—more human and more divine—be born. Being has sent out Becoming like a branch, and the join between them is Nothing. The Past—which, closed upon itself, was the sinister apple-chest, the " Abyss " of mystics—has opened a new dimension into the Future, and the Present is a mere logical-mathematic scission.

SHAN F. BULLOCK

By E. R. R. Green

THE novels of Shan Bullock were the measure of his discontent with his life as a civil servant in London rather than the result of any desire to bring recognition to his native Fermanagh. Yet he is none the less a regionalist writer because his region is built on the base of the family rather than on a community or a well-loved landscape. Like all regionalists he believed that happiness can only exist in places a man knows and where he is known.

The elder Bullock was a man of some importance in his world, a bailiff on the Earl of Erne's estate, a magistrate, and a strong farmer with 100 Irish acres of his own and another fifty rented. Two years experience of farming convinced the young Bullock that such a life left no time for books or writing and he gave it all up to go into the civil service. He gives no hint of disagreement with his father, but clearly that had played a part in his decision. Thomas Bullock was an Ulster Protestant of the old sort, one of a patriarchal race, the memory of which is already growing dim. The clear line which he drew between those who live on the land and the parasitical race of city-dwellers and clerks must have made his son despair of a compromise. Novel after novel represents his attempts to work out the subconscious conflict with his father

and to prove to himself that there could be no return to the old life. This did not help his work which is far too often dull, lumpy, and over-personal.

In this connection, it is significant that he began to write verse only after his wife's death in 1922. Two volumes of these poems were published under the titles of *Mors et Vita* (1923) and *Gleanings* (1926). In form, they are modelled on the English poets for whom he had a deep love and in content are so personal that one feels in reading them almost an intruder into the privacy of grief.

His first book, a collection of short stories, came out in 1893, and after that he maintained a steady output of novels for over thirty years. With the exception of one novel which is set in London and clearly autobiographical, they are all about Fermanagh life. The problems that interested him most were those of family relationships, the chief concern after all, of most peasant writers.

None of these novels have enough merit to be worth reading in themselves. If all that Bullock had to show were these efforts to quiet his conscience and ease his loneliness, the obscurity which now surrounds his memory would be deserved. In two novels, however, he forgot himself and wrote of the people he had grown up among. And when he did so the uncertainty, the stolidity, and the clumsiness of his style vanished. *The Squireen* was published in 1903, and *The Loughsiders*, his last novel, in 1924. Characteristically, they are studies of the vices rather than the virtues of the Irish character, the one of pride, the other of treachery.

The ruins of a fine house commonly give rise to reflections on the vanity of human greatness. Bullock tells in *After Sixty Years* how such a ruin and its story had been familiar to him from an early age. He chose wisely, however, to tell of the downfall of a man rather than of a house, the mere symbol of his vanity. Martin Hynes, the squireen, is the type of the big farmer's son—vain and coarse, a bully and a spendthrift. Yet the novelist will say no more than that 'there was some good in him, and some bad; a great deal that was neutral and ran as circumstances demanded, to this side or that of his character.'

The only way out of his financial difficulties that Martin could see, was to marry Red Hugh Fallon's daughter and forsake the penniless schoolmistress whom he loved. Fallon is a fine

study of the Protestant farmer at his worst, slow, heavy, narrow-minded, the self-righteous tyrant of his children, envious of Hynes while affecting to despise him. Fallon's peasant house and dour industry are used to throw the big, roomy house at Hillside, the big fields, and the careless life of its owner into higher relief. Martin's mother too, is a complete contrast to the peasant women of the Fallons, and while she lives prevents her daughter-in-law from falling into the rough ways that came naturally to her. Jane is a pathetic figure, crushed by her father and Martin, but the novelist makes no attempt to seek sympathy for her. Indeed, Bullock shows considerable skill and maturity in the way in which he plays her down so as to maintain interest in the unpleasant characters of Fallon and Hynes. *The Squireen* is the least slow-moving of all his novels. The accounts of Martin's wedding and death, for instance, are carried through with an economy and speed quite unusual to Bullock. Martin Hynes may be in part a projection of Bullock himself, a vision of the life he might have led if he had stayed in Fermanagh, but he is also an independent human being, not just a vehicle for the novelist's own agonies and doubts.

Despite the great contrast between the characters of the heroes, Richard Jebb and Martin Hynes, *The Loughsiders* strongly resembles *The Squireen*; the same inevitability leads to the triumph of Jebb's cunning as brought the crash of Hynes' pretensions.

The plot concerns Jebb's efforts to get the Nixon family into his toils after the death of Henry Nixon, a good farmer even if given to the bottle. Jebb poses as the friend of the family, persuading the quiet son Sam to emigrate, and pushing off Rachel, the daughter, on an R.I.C. pensioner. The youngest son distrusts Jebb, 'as deep as the devil's pit' he calls him, but his temper and weakness for poaching get him out of the way in the end and leave Richard Jebb free to marry the widow.

The characters in the novel are all lifelike and the dialogue, for long a difficulty with Bullock, is well handled. In this last novel Bullock for the first time showed signs of humour, of the driest sort admittedly, but unmistakable. Take, for example, this incident from the description of Henry Nixon's wake :

Presently those two ancients, lean, white-haired, lank-bearded, high-nosed, Francis Jackson and Reuben Darling, drew together in the corner by the wag o' the wall, with two frothing mugs between their feet . . .

'Tell me this Francis. You're a lot older than Henry was, twenty years I'd say. Well, how'd the thief find yourself, now?'

'Ready and willin,' I hope, before God.'

'Ah, but I'm thinkin' of a will.'

'Well—' Francis bent over his knee, pondering. 'It's this way, Reuben. All my life I've been a healthy man, an' I come of a long-lived stock, an' take good care of myself. I'd say I'd get good warnin' of the call.'

'Thieves give no warnin',' said Reuben. 'Poor Henry was caught in the dark.'

'That's true. Yes, I must be thinkin' it over.' Again Francis pondered; then turned his head slowly. 'You'd be ready for the thief yourself, Reuben?' he asked.

Reuben stooped for the mug, drank slow and deep, wiped his beard with a red handkerchief.

'I'm not as ready as I ought to be,' he answered.

'But then I haven't your asthma, Francis, and forby I'm two years a younger man.'

The long account of a wake and funeral of which this forms part is about the best piece of writing Shan Bullock ever did. This last novel showed that he had learnt much in thirty years, enough at any rate to write one book which will always deserve an honoured place in the history of the Anglo-Irish novel.

Shan Bullock stood alone, and that means that unless a writer is of gigantic stature he will be easily forgotten. Neither literary revival nor language revival claimed him. He was a novelist in a generation of poets and dramatists, he was an Ulsterman and above the feuds of Ulstermen, he was pessimistic at a time of national regeneration. Place him among the northern writers and he has none of the vigour of Carleton or the aggressiveness of St. John Ervine. He belongs to the borderland anyway, that soft borderland of lake and grass and rushes where the

energy of the north dies away, just as the hardness melts out of the accent south of the Erne and into Cavan.

It is not among Irish writers that a parallel to Bullock can be found. To compare him to Thomas Hardy is not to attempt an equation between the work of the two men. Like Hardy he could no longer accept the values of the agrarian world in which he had been formed nor find others to put in their place. He could play but little part in the Ireland of his day, for in a time of triumphant nationalism he had seen into an agrarian problem far deeper than the question of alien or native rule.

Undoubtedly he only saw these problems in so far as they affected his own community, especially the Protestants of that community. He understood Catholics better than he thought; those in his novels are real people even if he did see them from the outside. He was curious about them and liked to believe that 'less of real value came from association with my own kind than from the far more restricted relations with the Catholics I met and knew.' That was because, like all borderers, part of him yearned to tear down the barriers and because they, being part of himself, made him better able to understand all his nature and not just part of it.

It was Protestant Gorteen that he knew best, the fertile 'land of wisdom,' the lough shore frontier that shielded his island home. He could see through and through those Orange farmers; Richard Jebb was their canny acquisitiveness, patient and without scruple, Red Hugh Fallon their sour self-righteousness, Hynes the vanity and pride which they rarely had the power or money to indulge. His father was the sum of all their virtues, chief of them faith in himself and in his people. The defects in his work sprang from his inability ever to face his father and the biblical farmers on equal terms. Like many men of his generation Bullock was liberal only because he had lost his faith. It was his problem which had made him write and probably if he had resolved it the writing would have stopped. Irritating as his heavy ponderings over his own unhappiness may be, he remains the best novelist of modern rural Ulster. This excludes comparison with William Carleton who wrote of a world that has vanished so utterly that none can be made.

THE MAN FROM THE DOSS

By Florence Hackett

THE tall, thin man huddled in one corner of the gateway looked out at the rain. Slashing, drenching showers, falling in a dark and blustery night. "Pooh," he said, as he clutched his tattered black overcoat around his neck. A chilly feeling came over him. He left the corner and moved around. He stamped his feet, and as he did, water squelched from his soggy boots. He stamped backward and forward in an endeavour to get warm. He had not much dry space, for the arch over the gateway was the only shelter. The light from the electric lamps was reflected in the shining surface of the roads.

"Bah!" he muttered. "A dirty night!"

Dozy Doyle, the man without a home! He sighed a deep sigh, as he thought of himself the inmate of a doss-house. There was little chance of his making anything tonight. Not a pedestrian in sight, and not as much as one car. Even his friend, the cat, was missing. She came out to him almost every night, but this night there was no sign of her. Steeped in depression as he was, he took a gloomy view of her absence. "Run over, most likely. Ah well," he said, as he shook his head, "she hasn't much to live for any more than I have."

He watched the raindrops running along the electric wires; followed them until they fell to the ground. Then the rain grew lighter for a few minutes; it almost ceased.

"Pussy . . . Pussy," he called, his voice soft and low. His heart raised up, as he saw, emerging from the bushes in the little square opposite, the long, thin figure of his friend.

The cat crossed the road in a rush, its body low against the ground—a poor, hunted cat, who knew the meaning of fear. Dozy crouched down to welcome her. It cheered him to see her. He had felt utterly alone a few moments before; now he had company, and his spirits rose. "Poor pussy. Poor pussy." With the inside corner of his long black coat he wiped her fur. The cat purred loudly. It jumped on to the man's knees; it moved restlessly, opening and closing its paws on the thin, almost bare knees of the man. He winced as he felt the sharp claws. "Ouch, ye little divil. Go easy—ye're claws are like needles." He pushed her down and stood up. He groped in his pocket for the bit of meat that he had brought for her.

All through the winter he had come, bringing with him the best that he could get. The cat purred loudly. He tore the meat apart and fed her. She ate ravenously. When she had finished he took her in his arms. She rubbed against him, her head tossing up against his face, her purring louder than ever. He forgot his own hunger ; no longer did he think of his wet and sodden boots. She had enjoyed what he had given her but she still had hopes of more. Dozy took the lid from the garbage tin in the corner. In the shadow, he could see inside. He lifted up the cat and placed her in it. He had no more to give her. She must try her luck in there.

The rain fell again ; another squally shower. The man's misery returned. Nothing to do now but go back to the Doss. Often he had suggested bringing back the cat there, but Mrs. Cafferty, the owner, had put her foot down. " An ould cat ye want to bring in. Musha how bad ye are ! " she had said scornfully, " Amn't I scalded enough without that, an' all the riff-raff of the town an' they under my roof ! "

Usually on a wet night Dozy reaped a harvest, but tonight was so wet and miserable that he made up his mind that there was little ground for hope. During the next fair spell he must make a dash for the Doss. Hungry and cold as he was, he might put in the night there as best he could. If Mrs. Cafferty was home and in a good mood, he might not fare too badly ; but she had been away ten days.

The cat dragged part of a herring out of the garbage. It was all she had got after her rooting. Dozy smiled as he saw it on the pavement. A head, with a spine and bones attached. Dozy nodded, a sardonic smile on his face. It seemed as if the cat's luck was like his own tonight.

He looked up alertly as he heard the distant *honk* of a motor. His long, thin neck stretched out. He watched as it came splashing through the rain—just a big red lorry with a petrol tank on top. No hope from that. His alertness fell from him. " Bah ! " he said, speaking to the cat. " No good—not a bit of good, pussy." The cat rubbed against his ragged trousers. Bending, he pulled the long, upright tail. He told her of his intention. The cat grew frisky ; she lay on her back. He scratched her, and she purred.

He stopped suddenly and stood upright, for he saw once again the lights from an approaching car. This time a private one. It was . . . Was it possible ? Yes, it was stopping. It

was pulling up at the big house opposite—the house with the seven steps. Dozy forgot the cat ; forgot the rain and the blustery wind. Springing over the flooded channel, his long legs took him across the road in a few seconds.

A man in a white raincoat got out of the car, slammed the door and ran up the steps. Dozy stood waiting at the bottom of the steps, an abject sight, in his long black coat, his cadaverous face with black, unshaven chin, his big eyes pleading. He looked, by the light of the streets, to be a man at death's door ; but if you met him in the day-time, you would notice the whiteness of the eyes, the soundness of the teeth in his unwashed face. He did not beg ; he did not need to, his appearance was enough. If it were daylight, he might, perhaps, bend his foot, to show his boot without a sole, bare foot almost on the pavement.

He stood and waited, in a pessimistic mood. He looked down as he heard a " Meow " at his feet ; the cat, braving the terrors of the night, had followed him across the road. He smiled as he lifted it up. He put her through the area railings, just as the hall door opened. Moving forward, he could see the lighted hall. It seemed crowded with people. One man was putting on a white muffler, a woman was being helped into a fur coat. Now rain-coats, wraps. . . . Would they ever be dressed, he wondered ? He watched one woman, with uplifted chin, looked into a mirror as she applied the powder to her nose. They were at the door now. He saw an arm outstretched to test the weather. He heard the voice of a lady with white hair, " Do be careful. Be sure you don't catch cold." " Oh, we will be all right," a young man answered, as he kissed her. " Thanks, awfully . . . cheerio. See you soon." They were coming down the steps now, their heads bent close together under their umbrellas. Now they were in the car. Dozy's heart sank. He was finished now. He had stood in the drenching rain for nothing. He was turning despairingly away, when a window of the car was opened.

" Here you are ! "

" Thank ye, miss. God bless ye."

Another hand extended, another coin handed to him ; then, splashing through the wet streets, the car moved swiftly away.

Two coins ! Two silver coins ! Gosh, it was marvellous !

A man stood at the open door at the top of the steps. Another chance ! Dozy went up towards him.

" Bad night, sir." As he spoke, the man flung some coins

towards him. Then, turning, he went in, slamming the door.

"Blast him!" Dozy swore as he peered around the steps. He felt the blood rise to his face as he looked around. "When he has anything to give, why doesn't he give it decently?"

Dozy picked up the two coins. There might be more, but he did not wait to see. Haste was all that mattered now. Forgetting everything, even the cat, he sprinted across the street. He turned from the main street into a little narrow one. Reaching the shop with pub attached, he knocked at the door—once, twice, then a third knock. With his ear to the door, he listened, and smiled when he heard the sound of the bolt being drawn back.

The first good gulp from the foaming pint cheered him; the second sent the blood tingling through his veins.

"Another," he said, as he placed the empty glass down on the counter.

"The cow must have calved tonight." The big, floundering woman smiled at him, a toothless smile. Leaning on the counter, she gawped into his face.

"Ay, God bless her, the cow did calve—twin calves." He grinned, his good humour now restored.

The water from the old felt hat dripped on to the counter. Crumpling a piece of paper, the woman wiped it away. The water from his clothes dripped on to the sawdust on the floor. Dozy smacked his lips. He ran his tongue around them.

"You're drenched," she said commiseratingly. "Look, there's no one on the bench. They're at the counter inside. Let ye go in an' get a heat from the fire."

A loaf of bread, the remains of his second pint, a chunk of cheese, he took into the snug with him. The steam was rising from his sodden clothes as he finished his supper.

The two men standing at the counter winked at each other and gesticulated. Dozy knew what was going on behind him; he took no notice. He knew what the world thought about him; he didn't care.

As he put his glass back on the counter, he noticed the sausages.

Three of them," he said, pointing.

The woman, turning, flopped over to the upturned box, where they rested beside the dish of butter. Wrapping them in an old newspaper, she winked as she pressed them into his hand. "So long, and good luck!"

Turning the key, he opened the door and stepped out into the night.

It was blowing quite a gale now, and raining hard. His head down, his tall body bent, he pushed on towards the Doss.

"Kicked out of the town that scamp should be," said the tipsy knife-grinder in the snug, as he heard the door close behind Dozy.

"Ay—no good for King or Country," said the ex-Service man. "Kicked out is right."

"What harm is he doin' ye?" said the sloppy woman, her voice shrill. "He hasn't a dirty, foul tongue like more of the people, an' he doesn't make a beast of himself with the drink neither."

"Listen to her! Whatever ould charm that man has, he has the woman behind him. I never met wan yet to say a bad word of him." Slowly he turned the coppers that he laid out on the counter. He shook his head. Not enough for another pint. He put them back in his pocket. Sadly he put the empty glass to his lips.

* * *

Dozy passed a boy and girl saying an affectionate "goodnight" in a doorway. He frowned as he saw them, and bent his head once more. They brought back memories—memories of things which he spent his time trying to forget. Memories of a whitewashed cottage, a bride, a child—two years of bliss; then death, and desolation which had made him a wanderer for life.

* * *

Arriving at the Doss-house, he ran his long fingers over the lintel of the door. There was no key. Mrs. Cafferty must have come home, then. He knocked gently on the door.

The door was unlocked. Mrs. Cafferty stood inside—a big, angular figure with red hair and a foxy-cute look in her small penetrating eyes.

"'Tis yerself. Ye ould fool—aren't ye mad to be out a night the like of this!"

The only light came from the open kitchen door at the end of the passage.

"'Tis not too bad now," Dozy said meekly.

"'Tis only drowned ye are. Take off that coat. . . . Here, give it to me. Take off ye're ould boots too, and throw them in the doss." He did as he was told, and she went along the passage, muttering, with his big coat in her arms.

Dozy pulled the twine out of his boots. The air was thick in the Doss, heavy with the smell of humanity. Wet clothes were spread all over the place. The guard before the big coal fire had clothes upon it. Dozy peered around. Three of the mattresses on the floor were occupied; his own, the only empty one. Snores and groans were coming from the prone figures. He moved stealthily, fearful of the string of curses that he might bring down on his head.

He stole out in his bare feet as he heard his name being called.

It was bright in the kitchen, a good fire burning in the little range. Mrs. Cafferty stood inside the door as he went in, fondling her plump bare arms with her fingers.

"Aren't ye the cracked idiot?"

"Where were ye?" said Dozy. "I didn't lay eyes on ye this month of Sundays."

"If ye were guessin' 'til the crack of dawn ye wouldn't make out where I was."

Dozy was pleased he had conciliated her.

"Let ye sit down by the fire an' I'll tell ye." Mrs. Cafferty stood fingering her arms, her elbows on the back of her chair, her body bent.

Dozy seated himself. "Well—where were ye?"

"I was away," said Mrs. Cafferty, "buryin' me ould man."

"Ye mean—?"

"I mean what I say. Bill Cafferty is dead."

"God rest his soul," Dozy said, as he rubbed his hand over his unshaven chin. "Did he go sudden?"

"Bah!" She laughed harshly. "Ten years I'm waitin' for him to go." Her voice changed. "You're a widower, aren't ye, Dozy?"

"Yes." He shoved back his chair and stood up.

"Where are ye goin'?" Her voice was sharp.

"I brought in a few sausages. I thought ye might like a fry."

"Ye did in ye're hat," she said scornfully. "An' ye not knowin' if I was in at all."

"I knew ye'd be comin' back sometime," Dozy said, as he groped in his overcoat pocket."

She poked the fire vigorously. She took the big black pan from a hook on the wall, got a lump of dripping out of the bowl and put it on the pan. "Come on, put them here," she said.

"We might do worse things than eat sausages the night that's in it. . . .

"Ah, yes—I'm a widow now." Sighing, she seated herself, just as the fat began to sizzle.

"'Tis too bad altogether," said Dozy.

"Not a poor widow either," said Mrs. Cafferty, as she shook the pan.

"Who's inside?" Dozy indicated the doss with his thumb.

Her voice was hard as she answered, "Scratchy is there, an' Jim Carty." Her voice changed; it went thin and quavering as she mimicked, "An' the fiddler. 'Mind me fiddle. Mind me fiddle!! Mind me fiddle!!' I'd declare ye'd think it was a child." Her voice returned to her usual. "Look at it, over there on the press."

"Poor old divil! Sure I suppose 'tis all he has."

"How bad he is!" Her tone changed. "Listen" she said, as she moved closer and tipped him on the knee, "Cafferty left me forty pounds-eleven-shilling's-and fourpence."

"Did he now? 'Tis big money." Dozy fingered the sevenpence halfpenny in his vest pocket.

"That's not all I have," she said, with a toss of her head. "No, not all, by a long shot. I'm payin' in on him I dunno how long. Ay, payin' insurance upwards of eight years. Ye can figure it out, I'll draw a good bit from that."

Dozy drew in his long legs and stood up.

"Will I put a few cuts of bread on the pan—'twould go down good with them sausages?"

"Look, the loaf's on the table behind ye. Ah, yes," she said, with a sigh, "six long days now I'm a widow."

"Tut, tut." Dozy clicked his teeth. "Too bad entirely."

"Look at the tear on the knee of ye're trousers. Let ye sit down an' I'll put in a few stitches."

"'Twas the cat done it. Ah, sure I have an' ould needle abroad in the mornin'—I'll stitch it."

"Ye had a right to bring the ould cat with ye."

"I thought ye didn't like cats."

"I think there're mice in this place. I heard scratchin' a while ago. I donno, but it might be the rats that are in it."

"H'm," said Dozy. "H'm."

The woman eyed him. He was seated once more. He had the bread on the pan. Her eyes narrowed. "'Twill be goodbye

to the doss once and for all after this week." She saw him start.

"Ye mean—?"

"Ay, I mean that there'll be no more doss-houses for this little bird. If ye think I'll let every Tom, Dick an' Harry in under me roof now, you're greatly mistaken."

Dozy looked long and earnestly at the fork, which he laid out flat on the palm of his hand. It was a curious-looking fork. It had three prongs and a handle of bone.

"Doss-house!" she scoffed, tossing her ginger head. "Doss for the scum of the earth, not knowin' but 'tis the itch they'd be bringin' into the place. Oh, no. No more doss-house for me."

"I donno but they're done." Dozy stood up and peered down at the pan. Reaching out his long arm, he took a knife from the table. "Done to a turn," he said triumphantly. He cut the third sausage right in the centre.

Mrs. Cafferty dragged the newspaper from beneath her. "Put them on that—an' don't go smatherin' grease all over the place."

Dozy shoved the pan aside.

There was silence in the kitchen for a few moments; then it was broken by the sound Dozy made as his strong teeth crunched through the fried bread.

HENRY AND FRANCES

By Hubert Butler

ONE afternoon fourteen or fifteen years ago we were cataloguing the library of our neighbour, Miss Power of Kilfane. It is a long beautiful room with tall windows between the bookcases looking on to a sweep of green lawn and beyond it a classically planted park. The library with its great fire was a delightful place in which to work or shirk work and we found ourselves too often sinking into luxurious arm-chairs and reading the books we were supposed to be cataloguing. Most of them were collected in the 18th and early 19th century and the family had two ruling passions, Art and Sport. The Kilkenny Theatre and the Kilkenny Hunt were their creations but the first of their two enthusiasms evaporated, when the Theatre closed

its doors in 1819 and when soon afterwards its founder Richard Power, died. John Power's hunt still flourishes but the literature of hunting is not large and only a few books appear to have been added to the shelves in Victorian times. In his day, Richard Power filled his bookshelves not only with a unique collection of plays ; he had also a fine store of essays, biographies and political pamphlets. I was cataloguing these books when, on one occasion, I took down four small volumes dated 1770. They were called "A Series of Genuine Letters between Henry and Frances," but they had no author's name and I searched the pages for a clue. Some of the letters were dated from Kilfane and some from Farmley, where Henry Flood, the orator, lived ; I exclaimed aloud when I discovered that many of the letters were dated from my own home, six miles away. Maidenhall is a small unpretentious Georgian house and I knew nothing of its history in the eighteenth century for my great grandfather did not come to the district till 1800 or later. Then I remembered having seen the name Griffith on an old title deed. I borrowed the books to compare dates and make what inferences I could from the letters themselves. I was fascinated by the supple and often witty prose and successfully placed the authors, for there were two of them, Richard Griffith (Henry), and his wife, Elizabeth (Frances), who lived here and built this house about two hundred years ago.

The letters are disappointingly meagre about the ordinary social life of Bennetsbridge and Kilkenny ; they mainly deal with the complicated uneasy love affair of Henry and Frances. The Griffiths were a learned and cultivated couple, who for some reason to which they only allude mysteriously, had first to delay and then to conceal their marriage for several years. Possibly delays and dissimulations were caused by money difficulties or a disapproving relative but I think it more likely that Frances' pride was the hindrance. Henry did not consider it necessary to be faithful to her and wrote to her about his infidelities in an aloof, philosophical way. For example he had told her how his maid Nancy had had to be dismissed, because she made such a scene about being supplanted in his affections by Sally. Frances tried to reply with equal philosophy but probably her heart was not in it :

'As for the affair of Nancy and Sally, it is of no farther consequence to me than if James and the Coachman had been the Disputants. Nor did I mention my Opinion of Sally with any

Design ; for you may easily conceive that it is a matter of Indifference to me whether your present favourite was called Sarah or Anne ; for while I am in possession of the Jewel that is lodged within I care not who holds the Casket.

‘ O free for ever be his eye,
Whose heart to me is always true.’

Her biographer, Miss Tompkins, has discovered an ingenious sentence in Frances’ novel, ‘ The History of Lady Barton,’ which suggests a different outlook and may throw light on the postponement of the marriage.

“ There is something extremely indelicate in professing a Passion for a virtuous Woman before we have undergone a sufficient Quarantine after the Contagion of an abandoned one, and Man in such a Situation resembles a Centaur half-human and half-brute”

Perhaps she was waiting till Henry had been purged by time of all those earlier contagions before she would acknowledge him as her husband.

Henry lived at Maidenhall, farming and building a flax-mill, Frances stayed with her old aunt in Abbey Street, Dublin and later in lodgings in Chapelizod. Now and again, heavily chaperoned, she paid visits to her husband at Maidenhall. Before they published their letters they must have pruned them drastically, because though they are certainly genuine letters they contain very few of those trivial accounts of every day life which the originals must certainly have had and which we would to-day find so enthralling. In the first edition the Irish place-names had even been changed to English, so that the polite eye should not be offended by our barbarous nomenclature. Though frank about his morals he is fastidiously evasive about his occupation and finances and it is only by inference and reference to other works that we find why he paid visits to country houses round Kilkenny and what happened to his flax mills.

He was doing some electioneering work, though for whom he was canvassing I do not know ; as for the flax mills he had got a grant from Parliament for starting linen-manufacture on the Nore and in the expectation of a larger one he had built his factory and the house of Maidenhall. Then to set it going he had mortgaged it all. But very soon times changed for the worse, the second grant was withheld and Henry was ruined. It was soon after this that he and his wife decided to publish their letters to see if they could earn by literature what they had lost on linen. They succeed-

ed and she became an immensely popular novelist and the first English translator of Voltaire ; he too earned a living by his novels and his philosophical reflections. Most of their original work except the Letters is to-day unreadable but it charmed their contemporaries. Fanny Burney, after she had been reading 'The Letters of Henry and Frances,' took up 'The Vicar of Wakefield' by a new writer, Oliver Goldsmith, but she tells us she nearly threw it aside after reading a few pages, so disgusted was she with its coarse indelicate outlook on life and in particular on matrimony ; it was a cruel contrast to the 'so elegantly natural, so unassumingly rational' tone of the Griffith Letters. In London the Griffiths became well-known in the circle of Garrick and Johnson ; their little boy, Harry, who in the days of their poverty had to be brought up by his grandmother at Portarlinton, became a nabob in India. He returned to Ireland, bought the estate of Millicent in Co. Kildare and played an influential part in Grattan's parliament. He was the father of Sir Richard John Griffith, the distinguished geologist and compiler of the Survey of Ireland.

Last year I got a letter from a lady in an American University, enquiring about the Griffiths on whom she was writing a thesis. Americans are well known for their choice of recondite subjects for theses, but I was ashamed that this learned couple should be the object of careful researches in Alabama, while I, who lived in their house, knew so little about them. I found that an excellent biographical sketch of them had been published in 1938 in the Cambridge University Press by Miss J. M. S. Tompkins, who has collected much new material from English sources. Naturally it was their late London career that interested her most ; for me those few troubled years they spent in Bennetsbridge have by far the greatest appeal.

In those days it was possible for country gentlemen to see their lives in terms of classical analogy and imagery. It was easy enough for Irish landlords who left their latifundia to be administered by agents to picture their estates as 'rural retreats' to which they retired like Horace or Cicero from the cares of state to plant trees and study philosophy. They reflected on the vicissitudes of life, its inequalities and injustices with a freedom that would have seemed to a later generation subversive and disloyal to their class. Henry Flood regarded his substantial estate nearby at Farmley, as 'Tusculum,' where he relaxed from toil. He had amateur theatri-

cals and lent his support to the revival of interest in the Celtic past. Griffith, though only an unsuccessful mill-owner with a bare 600 acres modelled himself naturally on these philosophical grandees, calling his tours around his Bennetsbridge farm his 'Ambarvalia.'

Henry used to attend the Kilkenny assizes and watch with philosophical melancholy the procession of the condemned to the gallows. His contempt for worldly values was of a rather static and literary kind but there are many letters which show him to have been a kindly and original character. He had a peculiar variety of colic, which he treated with opium and horse radish emetic and once or twice with the "Hygean waves of Scarborough." When on a journey his agonies used to arouse so much exasperation and compassion in his fellow passengers that he forced himself to fast. Once at an inn he had three ginger-bread nuts and a pint of white wine and the landlord presented him with a bill for the full dinner. Griffith retaliated by going into the street and calling in an old beggar woman, to whom he insisted that the dinner which he had paid for but not eaten, should be served. 'She is my stomach,' he told the furious landlord.

Henry scarcely mentioned his employees or his factory. Before he purchased his machinery he paid a visit of inspection to Smyth's Linen Factory at Waterford and, for Frances' benefit, he tried to assimilate this revolutionary spectacle into his rational philosophy. In the mid 18th century, Chartism was still far off and machinery seemed capable of liberating Rational Man, a noble and exalted being, from his dependence on other living creatures. The animal nature, unlike machinery, 'through Caprice is capable of disappointing the Ends of its Creation.' Rational Man Henry thought, would be made free to contemplate Truth and Beauty and to practise Morality and Religion. 'The Vulgar Herd, who are insensible to these advantages, I take to be more imperfect instruments than a Windmill or a Loom.'

There is no evidence that Henry and Frances were snobbish or insensitive employers. Henry at least was by no means fastidious in his intimacies. But it seemed to them that the higher pleasures were the fruits of the cultivated understanding and those to whom fortune had denied cultivation were of necessity barren and therefore uninteresting. We hear almost nothing about them.

Last autumn, watching a reaper and binder going round one of his fields with a couple of men accompanying it, I remembered

how Henry used to sit among the stooks in a barley-field, writing to Frances and reading Pliny's Letters. Watching the binders and stackers, he counted 47 women and 14 men. Yet their lives were more remote from him than the lives of the ancient Romans. When his son was born, he wrote to Frances that if it *had* to be called Pliny he would prefer it to be named after the Younger Pliny than Pliny the Elder, since he would wish it endowed with liveliness rather than learning. Frances too liked to clothe her jokes and reflections in classical dress.

They had great skill in descriptive writing. How could the following account by Henry of a painted ceiling be bettered? 'A Fricassy of Cherubims with here a Head and there a Leg or an Arm, peeping through the Clouds, which look like a good, rich, thick Sauce poured about them.'

They were wholly unpolitical people. I doubt whether it ever occurred to them that happiness could be brought about by social legislation. Happiness depended on the right ordering of life, on the enjoyment of rational delights and the consolations afforded by wisdom and learning. In this system religion had an important function since it gave warmth to life and Henry and Frances tinker with it experimentally like a pair of amateurs trying to coax heat out of an old fashioned boiler. The principle on which it worked, they were aware, was Belief in God. This, Henry thought, was accessible to Protestants only. 'The popes of Rome,' he declared, 'by assuming to themselves the powers of Binding and Releasing, have long since superseded their God.' And at the request of a friend of his Henry wrote a strong letter denouncing the Errors of Rome and the Foulness of its Superstitions, its idle Forms and useless Ceremonies.

The occasion for this letter is remarkable. A Roman Catholic neighbour of Henry's had changed his religion in order to receive an estate valued at £700 per annum. He had been crushed by a letter 'all fire and brimstone' from a brother, who was a priest at Bordeaux and he had asked Henry to compose a reply for him. Henry reproduces his reply of which he was evidently proud. It could only have been written in the Age of Reason, when a Rational Argument was a weapon which could be adapted to every circumstance. It can justify apostacy for £700 per annum and is equally formidable whether it comes from the brain of the apostate or the friend who impersonates him. Henry was too volatile to be called a humbug; he could not deceive himself for long. He

was an experimentalist and would quickly have revolted against his own arguments if anyone had imposed them on him as dogma.

'Our Religion,' Henry wrote, 'is deduced from the plain Text of the Scriptures, yours from the sophistical Comments of the Priests. When a Priest once asked a Protestant, where his Religion was before Luther, he answered humorously but not less justly by asking him where was his Face before it was washed?'

He was as satisfied when his speculations led him to an orthodox conclusion as a patience player, when his patience comes out. Riding, once, towards the Castlecomer hills from Maidenhall, he saw the horizon flushed with fire so that he thought the coal seams were ablaze and that the whole earth was burning. He learnt from a passer-by that it was some natural exhalation of the heathy soil but he fell to meditating on the Last Conflagration which is prophesied in the Scriptures. At last it seemed to him that he had found a way of reconciling Religion and the Philosophy of Nature. His explanation is ingenious rather than convincing. It concerns the extra weight of the earth due to God's Creation of Living Things. Bodies attract in proportion to the weight of matter in them. The centripetal by degrees overcomes the centrifugal and the earth rushes into the sun. Hence the conflagration. About this argument Henry said rather smugly: 'As I am not quite orthodox, on some points, I own that I heartily rejoice when I can make amends on others.'

Henry believed in the Resurrection of the Body, but he elaborated this sombre belief with private fancies of his own. He often meditated how his body could best be disposed of so that its elements could be converted into some other animate being or beings with the greatest speed and economy. Mummification he held in horror. 'I could not bear the Thought of lying a moment Idle, alive or dead.' Burning he could tolerate, provided it were not in an 'Asbesto Shroud.' But best of all, he said, 'I would chose to be devoured by Beasts, as by that means, I should more immediately become Part of Living Animals. He preferred Dogs and among Dogs he chose a Mastiff for its Courage, a Hound for its Sagacity and a Spaniel for its Fidelity.

Even before his financial crash they were finding life in the countryside lonely and unsatisfying. When Frances was away, he now had no friend to console him for her absence at Maidenhall, save a 'low-spirited cat,' called Sultana Puss. 'Her nerves,' he said, 'are so weak (which I attribute to her drinking tea in a

morning without Eating), that the least loud Word sets her trembling ; so that I dare not chide an awkward Housemaid for fear of putting Madam into her Hysterics.'

On his visits to country-houses, Henry was continually affronted by the spectacle of 'bookless, sauntering Youth.' 'Before this century shall be closed,' he wrote, 'it is not impossible that anyone who can commit a Speech or a Sentence to Writing will pass for a Conjuror, who can paint his Thoughts on Paper.' And to Frances he wrote, 'Your Sense, your Principles and your Taste are thrown away upon the Deaf Adder and the very Seeds of them all stifled in the Growth or buried like a bad Ploughman's Grain by Clods of Earth laid over them.' In another letter he compares her writings 'to certain rich Essences which only affect the finest Capillaries.' Their neighbours were sociable enough but without fine capillaries and, thinking of their tedious visits, Henry said, 'Momus very justly found fault with the Construction of a House, because it had no Wheels to be moved by when the Situation became uneasy.'

At last Henry gave up Maidenhall, which he had loved so much. He told Frances how riding home from Dublin, when his decision was made, his impatience to see it grew at every mile. 'The thoughts of quitting it have the more attendered me towards it. If I thought there was a Naiad or a Dryad in the Place who would lament my absence, I should sacrifice my Interests to my Superstition ; but my Religion teaches me that wherever we go our Guardian Angel accompanies us. I think I but obey its Call whenever I change my Situation to my Advantage.'

The Griffiths often indulged romantic dreams but they held them under control, submitting themselves constantly to calm and ruthless examination. It is rumoured that their marriage ended in separation, but, even if this were true, I doubt whether either of them would have considered it an ill-advised marriage. Continually at every stage they had tested the flavour of their relationship and found it good. It can only have been the dregs that they jettisoned.

But his marriage was still recent and wholly satisfying when Henry left Maidenhall. He must have felt that a turning point in his life had been reached and that a rather more solemn self analysis than he had hitherto attempted should be undertaken. On leaving the house he made a will in favour of Frances and her infant son and wrote upon the wrapper the reasons for his marriage and his theological beliefs.

‘I was not overreached into this Match by Art nor hurried into it by Passion, but, from long experience of her Sense and Worth, I reasoned myself into it. . . . I found that I had so engaged her Affections that no other Man could make her happy and so dallied with her Character, that only myself could repair it.’ . . .

‘I am in my Religion a Christian ; but of the Arian heresy as it is stiled by bigotted Councils. I was for many years a Deist, till Dr. Clayton, Bishop of Clogher, his Essay on Spirit and subsequent Writings on the same Subject had reconciled the doctrine of the Trinity to human reason and metaphysical science.

Humanum est errare et nescire ;

Ens Entium, miserere mei.’

Last year the Nore flooded, as it so often does, and flattened out the remaining wall of Griffith’s flax-mill, which has been used for some generations as a boundary fence. The mill-stream has long been choked up and it was only quite lately that poking about on the banks of the river I found traces of its stone built sides. The cottages that housed the mill-hands as well as the fifty nine harvesters have gone without a trace, but the elm trees which Henry planted are still standing. As for Maidenhall, it has not changed very much ; its successive owners have always been poor and never had the money to make many of those lavish improvements which were admired in Victorian times.

DRAMATIC COMMENTARY

By A. J. Leventhal

THE PLOT SUCCEEDS. By Austin Clarke. Lyric Theatre Company.

THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING. By Christopher Fry. Longford Productions. Gate Theatre.

KNOCK. By Jules Romains. D. U. Modern Languages Society. Peacock Theatre.

DIE JOURNALISTEN. By Gustav Freytag. D. U. Modern Languages Society. Peacock Theatre.

UNIVERSITIES DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION FESTIVAL. Newman House.

Mr. Clarke's mind seems to be an inexhaustible storehouse of medieval fantasy. For the most part his fictional or stage compositions are serious interpretations of a period which he has made his own as a background for his novels or poetic plays. They are, however, not always wholly serious—a sly barb of wit aimed at authority finds its mark or, as in *Black Fast*, you get religious disputation resolving itself into an uproarious “act of nutrition.” *The Plot Succeeds* does not claim to be farce as does *Black Fast*. The programme describes it as poetic comedy. This is an understatement or an exaggeration in accordance with your view as to which mode ranks higher in entertainment. There is much of the element of farce in a plot which depends for its peripeties on arbitrary miracles and for its humour not only on its heroic couplets but on a thousand kisses. True, Mr. Clarke has justification in Gaelic legend for Mongan's powers of transformation and the constant changes gave occasions for the comic situation as well as for ridicule. But the result suggested not the well-made play but the loose construction of what might be called ‘near pantomime’ or ‘quasi revue.’ Indeed, the announcement of the arrival of Abbot and Brother with the sun shining on their tonsured pates suggested that Mr. Clarke was bringing for the first time to the Irish stage the stock comic cleric of traditional French farce.

Cyril Cusack as the volatile, unaccountable Mongan Mor of Ulster was not altogether convincing; his whimsy, produced by a prose rendering of the author's lines, did not have that quality which made his other performances in Mr. Clarke's plays so memorable. Eithne Dunne as Dulaca, Mongan's wife, was full of feminine guile and smiled with condescending impartiality on both her husbands as well as on the possessed Abbot. The latter part was a difficult one and to have succeeded in it ideally Robert Hennessy would have had to be far more

extravagant, more farcial, less socially cowed by his cowl when under the Mongan spell. A wink and a nod (his gestures in this transformation) failed with the audience as with the blindest of horses. The other parts were competently filled but the significance of the stamping Manannan MacLir was lost on me as was (unless it was Mr. Clarke's elfishness) the end of the play which left Branduv of Leinster in bed with a succubus. The play was optimistically named; if all else succeeded the plot (technically speaking) did not.

If Mr. Clarke's cynicism in *The Plot Succeeds* strikes the ear with the disturbing undertone of a bassoon, Mr. Christopher Fry brings to *The Lady's Not For Burning* a full-throated orchestra of satire (saved from the post-first-war despair). There are similarities. Both reach back into a past where social and religious values differ vastly from our own and both are really less concerned about history than about the contemporary scene. Mr. Clarke, however, feels his period with a greater intensity than does Mr. Fry who allows himself any verbal anachronism that will heighten the dramatic value of his play or add a satiro-comic touch. Not that Mr. Fry has no historic sense. To anyone that knows his *The Firstborn* set in the Egypt of the ten plagues this would be an impossible proposition. But Mr. Fry is concerned with comedy here not history.

There is not one of the characters (with the possible exception of Richard the orphaned clerk whose romantic soul has escaped all taint of irony) who does not produce either the bitter line, the streak of cynicism or a backflash to what the deservedly forgotten Robert Buchanan called "the fleshly school of poetry." Even the young Alison Eliot (played by Diana Campbell with a delightful ingenuousness far removed from *ingénue* routine) shakes off her convent modesty and makes the first advances to Richard. It does not matter that we are assured by the title of the comedy that there will be no faggots for Jnenet Jourdemayne, we can yet watch with fascination the trange behaviour of the men who wished to save her for their own ends or burn her for public policy or esquire the issue, as in the case of the Chaplain (a restrained, impeccable study by Dan O'Connell).

This would have been a really good production had it not been marred, for me at any rate, by the rendering of Thomas Mendip's lines by Blake Gifford. To complain of indistinct speech on the stage is common enough but in this case the very distinctness of the lines jarred. To hear is certainly essential for an audience but in hearing to be aware of all the phonetic mechanisms, to hear final 'd's' and 't's' exploded into an 'e' mute, to have nasal resonance turned on with barnstorming, even if rhythmical, rhetoric, turns poetry, particularly when it is unfamiliar, into a noise that defeats by its own monotony the very purpose of the clarity of diction and induces at the best inattention and at its worst, as in the case of a member of the audience behind me, sleep. Iris Lawler as Jennet Jourdemayne achieved at times great lyrical heights and showed herself capable of using a statuesque immobility with telling dramatic effect. This, in her case, is all the more remarkable for her lively temperament seemed to destine her to hoydenish parts. A special word of praise is due to Alpo O'Reilly who, as Matthew Skipps, the drunken rag and bone vendor, was allowed an extravagance in the nature of the character which he did not abuse and really brought down the house despite the uneasiness caused by his illiterate blasphemies.

The exigencies of space forbid my dealing as fully as I would like with a series of presentations by University dramatic societies. The most meritorious, if not the best acted, was a production of Jules Romains' *Knock* by the Dublin University Modern Languages Society at the Peacock Theatre which was so enthusiastically played, so ingeniously produced that one forgave the women in the cast their hibernicised French *patois* and remembered the *mise en scène* and the fluency of the male players (notably John Nahman and Peter Devlin). This is a play which might profitably be put on in translation by a professional company. It always reminds me of the not so impossible physician who eschews the advice of his colleagues and his own teaching and secretly doctors himself with publicised patent medicines. It is as sound in psychology as it is productive of laughs.

Gustav Freytag's *Die Journalisten* was not so happy a choice by the same Society. It is too wordy and too concerned with an outmoded German political life to hold a modern audience. Verbosity notwithstanding, it was well spoken and we heard *echt Deutsch*, men and women being equally at home in the language of Goethe. It would, by the way, have been more significant to have chosen one of the latter's plays than this minor Freytag stuff especially since we have been just celebrating a Goethe centenary.

The 1950 Universities' Dramatic Association Festival was remarkable for the diversity of the plays chosen and the skill in acting displayed by the students. Marlowe's *Edward II*, probably its first appearance in Dublin, presented difficulties in production which were adequately overcome by the Dublin University Players. The outstanding performance came from Barry Roach in the title part. Despite a handicap in lack of stature, he gave dignity to a character not altogether sympathetic and by the artistic use of empathy (if I may use psychological jargon) felt himself into the part to the extent that I, for one, was tensely held throughout the play by his gradations of emotions and sincerity.

Molière's *L'Avare* (University College Dramatic Society) also brought to light the talents of Patrick Fay as Harpagon. I remember, however, other performances by him in the Abbey Experimental Theatre where he learned his craft. This was a less arduous part than Edward II but it was subtly handled with a nice restraint which was cunningly lost in the famous scene in which he discovers the theft of his money.

Belfast and Glasgow contributed Shaw's *Candida* and James Bridie's *Mr. Bolfray* respectively. The former play sounded unexpectedly dated and the latter lacked the professional touch to make it credible.

Art Notes

By Edward Sheehy.

RECENT PAINTINGS. By Nano Reid. At The Victor Waddington Galleries.

OIL PAINTINGS. By Liam Proud. At The Dublin Painters' Gallery.

WATERCOLOUR DRAWINGS OF DUBLIN. By Patrick Hall. At The Victor Waddington Galleries.

MEDIAEVAL WOODEN FIGURE SCULPTURES IN IRELAND. At The National Museum.

So far the most interesting exhibition of the year was that of Nano Reid with twenty-six oils and a number of watercolours. Miss Reid is a natural painter, by which I mean that her work gives the impression of unstudied directness and spontaneity in the execution which again implies the cultivation of technical powers to the point where they can be used almost without taking thought. She is a natural painter also in so far as her visual preoccupations are uncomplicated by any extraneous considerations. These elements give to her work a deceptive simplicity which belies an extremely subtle and satisfyingly original colour sense as well as a strongly expressive calligraphic line, both used with reserve. The absence from her work of the politer virtues, finish, obvious charm or what used to be called truth to nature, has led some critics to decry her work in favour of painters who are vastly her inferior in every sense. Not that her work is without faults; but they are the faults of her qualities. Sometimes she sins through being over-subtle in colour resulting in tonal monotony. Or occasionally spontaneity in execution may degenerate into what can hardly be distinguished from the careless application of paint. But these apply only to a small minority of the canvases in the present exhibition which is full of solid achievement. In the three years since her last show she appears to me to have developed considerably in the perfection of her very personal idiom. This is particularly evident in her *Portrait of a Young Man* in which a strong and expressive calligraphic framework provides the structure for a fluent and tonally subtle use of paint. The same broad calligraphy is put to a different but no less effective use in linking up the sombre planes of colour in *Farm by the River* which is one of the best of her landscapes. *Boyne at Slane*, a small canvas, is on the other hand built up solely of colour to a quiet perfection of lyrical simplicity. Though her palette is normally, or rather more typically, sombre, a number of pictures show her using colour more vivaciously. *Farm in July* and *Bathers* are successful examples. I liked also the simply formalised treatment of the genre theme in *Card Players*.

In some pictures, notably *Hanging out Washing*, she makes effective use of a deliberately distorted perspective to achieve an interesting formal concentration. Generally her simplification is formally satisfying because inspired by a lyrical feeling for line; but when, as in *Boyne Bridge and Gulls* it approaches what I feel to be a conscious naïveté the result is disturbing; all the more so since the offending birds dominate an otherwise lovely and spacious picture.

An exhibition of her watercolours is due to open shortly at St. George's Gallery, Grosvenor St., London.

Liam Proud paints with an unrelieved and studied literalness which may be due either to the timid uncertainty of inexperience, or to a failure to appreciate the possibilities of his medium. Moreover he uses his paint so consistently flattened that his work in oil has more the effect of gouache. In treatment of landscape his approach leans to a rather obvious and posterish decoration which can be

fairly successful when, as in green composition of *Bullock Harbour, Dalkey*, he lets himself go completely in that direction. *Farmstead and Trees, Co. Dublin*, has some nice though rather carefully contrived passages; though the effect of the whole is lost through the heavy painting of the shadow in the foreground. I do not know the painter's work well enough to say whether or not his *Winter Landscape* points a direction. With its consistently cold tones and a formalism (except in the clumsy blue hill) somewhat reminiscent of Paul Nash, it was to me his most successful picture. *The Annunciation*, after a pre-Renaissance model, was far too ambitious a subject for his technical equipment.

Patrick Hall has all the virtues of a good topographical painter in so far as he does not allow the demand for literal accuracy of his *métier* exclude that modicum of atmosphere or idiosyncrasy of vision without which such work is dead as an architect's blue-print. To accuracy his line adds both refinement and variety; while his use of wash is delicate, harmonious and unobtrusive. He has chosen his subjects well and from a sufficiently interesting angle apart from their value as records. While he remains in this category his work is so consistently good that it is difficult to pick out any particular work for special mention. *Heart of City* and *Early Morning Liffey* stand out as good examples of his control of a city panorama which must demand considerable technical expertise. But where his work approaches the freedom and personal vision of the watercolour proper the critic is tempted to judge in a different category and therefore to demand more than accuracy sweetened by atmosphere. One picture, *Rain of Quay*, escaped altogether from the merely topographical idiom to achieve a tender lyricism in limpid colour.

It is no criticism of Mr. Hall when I suggest that his panoramic view of *Drogheda* should afford a fearful warning to architects and town-planners. The picture shows a beautiful skyline, homogeneous and full of character, and also the pale, massive, rectangular and characterless block of the hospital which will ultimately dominate it.

For some months now there has been a collection of Irish Mediaeval sculpture in wood on show at the National Museum as well as some continental pieces which have found their way to Ireland. In many cases the origin of a particular piece is merely conjectural; yet sufficient remains of undoubted native workmanship to give some idea of native craftsmanship in that medium. In fact, considering the perishability of the material and the vicissitudes of all iconography it is astonishing that any have survived at all. The present collection, some of which is on temporary loan, is due mainly to the labours over a good number of years, of Miss Catriona MacLeod. Not merely has she gone exhaustively into the historical end of the subject in a series of papers published in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* in 1945-6-7; but she has been directly engaged on the almost invariably necessary work of restoration. I know the word 'restoration' has a bad reputation with lovers of the antique for its own sake. But in a considerable number of these cases it involved more nearly the excavating of the original work from under the accumulation of generations of household paint. Where restoration proper was necessary, as in the case of completely worm-eaten or badly damaged wood, the work was done with an eye to comparable contemporary work. This exhibition should be seen by anyone interested in sculpture while it is still together. The 14th century figure of St. Molaise, in oak, with its simplicity, repose and beautiful dignity, is alone worth a visit.

Obituary

JAMES SLEATOR.

I knew James Sleator only during the later years of his life, since his return to Ireland in 1941, after nearly twenty years abroad. Nevertheless, his sudden death in January left me with a personal sense of loss which far outweighed my realisation of the loss to Irish painting and to Irish public life. If I depart thus from the conventions of public utterance it is because I feel that many, separated in years from him by almost a generation, will still feel that by his death they have lost a friend. Sleator had a natural kindliness, a faculty for unobtrusive sympathy, an abiding humour which charmed all who met him into almost forgetting his position as Ireland's most distinguished portrait painter and the public dignity of his office as President of the Royal Hibernian Academy. I think it was this warm and tolerant humanity which gave his work its real distinction; which made it possible for him, unlike most academic portraitists, to treat his subject as a person and not as a mere phenomenon. To realise this faculty in him one has only to look at the portraits of such diverse personalities as Rutherford Mayne, Dr. Thomas Bodkin, Professor Alfred O'Rahilly or Kate O'Brien, which are among the finest of his recent work.

As a painter, James Sleator belonged to the Orpen tradition. When he came from Belfast to Dublin in 1910, to study at the Metropolitan School of Art, Orpen was his first important teacher. Later he studied in London at the Slade and in Paris, before returning to Dublin in 1915, to become a teacher at the Metropolitan. His first exhibit at the Royal Hibernian Academy was in 1915, and in 1917 he was elected successively associate and full member. He left Dublin again in 1922, spent some years in Italy painting portraits and landscapes, after which, on Orpen's advice, he opened a studio in London and soon established himself as a successful portrait painter. While in London he did a good deal of work in association with Orpen, and, on the latter's death, in 1931, was appointed to complete a number of that painter's unfinished commissions. During his remaining years in London he executed many important portraits and for some time taught painting to Winston Churchill.

He returned to Dublin in 1941, and, apart for an occasional journey abroad, remained here until his death. I shall not here stress his reputation as a painter, sufficiently attested to by the immediate and unquestioned acceptance of his pre-eminence in portraiture. Orpen's influence was always apparent in the fine craftsmanship of his work, but not otherwise to an extent sufficient to obscure his own individual honesty of feeling and observation. In 1945 he was elected President of the Royal Hibernian Academy and, while in that office, it would be difficult to overestimate the effect of the friendly help and sympathy he extended to beginners in the art. Though himself an academic painter he was completely free from academic intolerance and his broad sympathy with youthful experiment was exercised both privately and through his patronage of the Exhibition of Living Art from its foundation.

His death is a great loss to painting in Ireland, as well as a deep personal one to the many who valued his friendship.

E. S.

BOOK REVIEWS

STRINDBERG: AN INTRODUCTION TO HIS LIFE AND WORK. By Brita M. E. Mortensen and Brian W. Downs. Cambridge University Press. 12s. 6d.

Strindberg had a remarkable gift for defining his own dramatic aims in terse phrases. Everyone knows that famous sentence, in which he summed up the nature of the new realistic drama and at the same time rid the stage of unnecessary realistic encumbrances: "With the aid of a table and two chairs the strongest conflicts which life offers could be presented." In his last phase the great Swedish dramatist revolted from Naturalism and peered experimentally into the future, preparing the way for the Intimate Theatre. His comment on one of his later short plays, though not well-known, brings us into the twentieth century:—

Dream Play imitates the disconnected, but apparently logical form of the dream. Anything may happen; everything is possible and probable. Time and space do not exist; on an insignificant background of reality imagination spins threads and weaves new patterns; a mixture of memories, experiences, free fancies, absurdities and improvisations. The characters split, double, multiply, evaporate, solidify, diffuse, clarify. But one consciousness reigns over them all—that of the dreamer; it knows no secrets, no congruities, no scruples, no law.

It is significant that the authors of *Strindberg: An Introduction to His Life and Work* do not quote this passage in full, despite its importance; nor do they indicate fully the influence of the *Kammarspel* or *Chamber Plays*, which Strindberg wrote in his last years. These plays hastened experimental technique in Europe, foreran the Expressionistic movement and yielded many suggestions to Cocteau and other dramatists of our own time.

Those who have read Mr. Brian Downs's book on Ibsen will be disappointed by this popular study written in collaboration with Brita M. E. Mortensen. The recent celebration of the Strindberg centenary has been responsible for a number of hasty books. Smaller and yet more informative than the present one was the manual on Strindberg published by G. A. Campbell in 1933. Miss Mortensen and Mr. Downs are inclined at times to rouse our curiosity and fail to satisfy it. They write, for example,—

One passes by as quickly as possible the odious hypocrisy and disregard of Strindberg's express wishes made manifest at the interment in Nya Kyrkogarden of Stockholm—

But they do not tell us what were his wishes or what happened. Those who are unacquainted with the bizarre life and work of Strindberg, his unhappy marriages, his occultism and periods of craziness, will find here the well-known facts; and the detailed descriptions of his many novels and short stories will be found useful. But some interesting points are overlooked. For example, the authors note the influence of Hans Andersen on the fanciful play, *Lucky Peter's Journey*, written by Strindberg in 1882, but they have failed to notice the direct influence of Charles Dickens shown in the first scene. The *Christmas Stories* of Dickens have a sentimental and popular appeal, but Strindberg was the first to realise their real significance. In them the Victorian novelist was attempting to create for city life, with its rapidly passing, forgetful multitudes, a folklore of its

own. Various writers during the Strindberg centenary have concentrated on the plays of his Naturalistic period, such as *The Father*, *Miss Julia*, *The Creditor*, *The Stronger Woman*, though the phase of realism has become dated. But it is impossible to estimate the ultimate value of Strindberg's dramatic work until his last experimental plays have been seen in perspective. The bewildering complexity of a modern self-conscious age is anticipated in his methods.

"I have drawn characters vacillating—broken mixtures of old and new; my souls are conglomerations of past and present stages of culture, scraps of books and newspapers, fragments of men and women, torn shreds of torn Sunday attire that are now rags, such as go to make up a soul."

Yet, in contradiction to all this sophistication, there runs through the later plays a naïveté that it would be hard to parallel. Strindberg's re-conversion to Christian Evangelicism, though it may have helped to restore balance to his mind, certainly injured his art. The complexity of his later plays mingles with a Sunday school didacticism that is in very bad taste.

A. C.

THE LAST ROMANTICS. By Graham Hough. Duckworth. 15s.

Mr. Graham Hough explains in his preface: ". . . I became interested in the genesis of Yeats's ideas from those of the small poetic circle with whom he associated in the nineties. They in turn seemed to owe almost everything to Pater and the pre-Raphaelites, and from them I was inevitably led back to Ruskin. At this point I came to a stop." He found, as he studied Ruskin, Rossetti, Morris, Pater, Yeats against the background of the nineteenth century writing, that a pattern was discernible, complex and impressive; it took shape as he realised that these writers shared "a common passion for the life of the imagination, conceived as an all-embracing activity, apart from the expression of it in any one particular art."

The reader, forcibly battered by Ruskin's biographers on Effies and Rosies, will find his reluctant appetite stimulated by Mr. Hough's brilliant, stringent and witty discourse on a Ruskin, unsauced by anything save his own greatness. Not that his social or sectarian conscience is allowed to balloon too wildly; in fact Mr. Hough's admiration has its sharp edge:

"It might be pointed out that peasants several times revolted in the Middle Ages, in spite of the metaphysical satisfactoriness of their status; and that however wrong they may be, most men feel freer after a day's light work in a factory than after a day spent in dropping their blood in the furrows of their fields."

And a recollection of Ruskin's exquisite drawings and of the formidable number of his books will make one echo Mr. Hough's wish "that he had drawn more and written less." The paradoxical nature of the pre-Raphaelite movement and its two main streams—"the medieval and archaising tendency, and the scrupulous fidelity to fact derived from Ruskin"—are treated with insight. The emphasis here is, of course, on Rossetti. "We begin to discern for the first time the figure of the conscious aesthete, deliberately pursuing beauty . . ." Of particular interest is the consideration of his translations from early Italian poetry. There is much fascinating speculation as to the probable influence of Pugin on Ruskin and, through him, on Morris. Of the latter Mr. Hough boldly

says, and amply demonstrates: "There is a sense in which he did not believe in art enough." He also traces Morris's attempt "to tie the Ruskinian and the Communist positions together" and indicates how much of his work was nullified because he was "already afflicted with the basic schizophrenia of the modern intellectual." One thinks largely of Morris, and other romantics, as sailing uncharted seas tied, more or less spectacularly, to the ancient mast of tradition; but here the extent of his influence and its value for us are studied cogently and with appreciation.

Mr. Hough's historical imagination is so subtle, his impressive erudition so lightly worn, that the transition from chapter to chapter involves no break in unity. In the essay on Pater the background of "religious thought (driven) back to subjectivism" as well as the smallest wisps of personal doubts and tribulation are made to show up the exhausting nature of his conflict, to explain his critical preoccupations; and it is claimed as Pater's distinction "that he approaches this reunion between the arts without the muddle and the pietistic flummery that so often obscure Ruskin's real intentions." The chapter 'Fin-de-Siècle' sorts out that sensational hotchpotch: "There is the muddled aesthetic doctrine contrived out of a mixture of Whistler and Ruskin: still odder is the fusion of Ruskinian and pre-Raphaelite ideas with others whose natural habitat is the pages of Gautier or Huysmans." He comments delightfully on the virtuously wicked writers of the period: "they dimly saw that their exotic delicacies required some supplement, but they were apt to decide that what was needed was some good plain boiled potatoes—a little solid morality to compensate for their flights into the perverse." But for Mr. Hough it is the age that "nourished the genius of Yeats." His critical evaluation—especially of the later Yeats—is wholly admirable, as is his interpretation of *A Vision*, with its "three incomprehensibles." One has, perhaps, visualized that scheme as an impossible and sinister trapeze from which the poet made his miraculous leaps between sombre heaven and the richest of earthly ditches; but Mr. Hough, with infinite patience, leads to his illuminating conclusion:

"All remains obscure, but involved with the obscurity is a sense of richness and adequacy, the antithesis of the cheap desire to explain away what cannot be immediately understood; and it is, perhaps, not an accident that the closest analogy to Yeats's thought is to be found in the work of the psychologist (Jung) who has done most justice to the depth and variety of human experience."

When one reflects where this extraordinarily sensitive and epigrammatic book on writers for whom beauty was the sinews of life had its own genesis—in a Japanese prison during the war—it seems that Yeats spoke too soon his lines: "We were the last romantics . . ."

L. H.

THE CLASSICAL TRADITION: GREEK AND ROMAN INFLUENCES ON WESTERN LITERATURE. By Gilbert Highet. Oxford University Press. 42s.

This survey of classical literary influence extends to more than seven hundred pages and was published originally in America. The book is popular in its intentions and there is no indication that Mr. Highet is acquainted too deeply with classical literature—at any rate, he wears his learning very lightly. The well-known periods of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance are described

effectively but in cursory fashion, and most readers will be acquainted already with the general, if not the particular, information set down by Mr. Highet. At a time, however, when the great classical tradition is in danger of being expelled from school and college, it is well to be reminded of our historical debt.

Our modern world is in many ways a continuation of the world of Greece and Rome. Not in all ways—particularly not in medicine, music, industry, and applied science. But in most of our intellectual and spiritual activities we are the grandsons of the Romans, and the great-grandsons of the Greeks. Other influences joined to make us what we are; but the Greco-Roman strain was one of the strongest and richest. Without it, our civilization would not merely be different. It would be much thinner, more fragmentary, less thoughtful, more materialistic—in fact, whatever wealth it might have accumulated, whatever wars it might have fought, whatever inventions it might have made, it would be less worthy to be called a civilization, because its spiritual achievements would be less great.

In a book which is intended for the uninitiated, it would be too much to expect any departure from the main way. But it is surprising to find a complete chapter devoted to Shakespeare's indirect debt to Greek and Latin culture, when Ben Jonson is dismissed in a few lines.

We know that Ben Jonson was a good scholar. We know that Shakespeare had long and lively discussions with him. (Do we?) Often Jonson must have tried to break the rapier of Shakespeare's imagination with the bludgeon of a learned quotation or an abstruse philosophical doctrine, only to find Shakespeare, in a later tournament or even in a play produced next season, using the weapon that had once been Jonson's, now lightened, remodelled, and apparently moulded to Shakespeare's own hand.

From such vague surmise the ordinary reader would hardly suspect the existence of Jonson's classical tragedies and comedies. Inexcusable, however, is Mr. Highet's treatment of the French classical tradition. In a brief chapter of ten pages, entitled *Baroque Tragedy*, he discusses the work of Corneille and Racine, giving to both of them scarcely more than a few paragraphs, and comparing them so oddly with Milton, Dryden and Addison, that the general reader might well assume French poetic drama to be of little consequence. It is surprising, also, to learn that the style of Gibbon is not as good as we thought.

It has often been praised, and it is truly praiseworthy as a feat of will-power. The difficulty is that, as the lady in Boileau said of Chapelain's poetry, no one can read it The result of reading a few score pages of this is eloquently described by Dickens. After listening to 'Decline and Fall Of the Rooshan Empire,' Mr. Boffin was left 'staring with his eyes and mind, and so severely punished that he could hardly wish his literary friend Good-night.'

It appears, however, that Mr. Highet is prejudiced against Gibbon's ironic treatment of religion, but it is not until later that we detect the workings of American Fundamentalism. A chapter dealing with the poets and writers of the nineteenth century in France, Italy and England, from Shelley to Leconte de Lisle, is given the sensational title *Parnassus and Antichrist*. Even the biblical research of that century comes under the same popular stricture.

It is impossible to believe in Christianity without accepting its traditions with faith as well as with reason. Therefore the purely rational type of criticism, which sometimes treated the gospel and the growth of the faith purely as 'a product, like sugar or vitriol,' was in effect anti-Christian.

This attack on scholarship surely belongs to the political hustings rather than to a serious study of the classic tradition. We may attribute it, perhaps, to the hysterical war neurosis which is spreading through the United States and threatening to afflict us all.

As an instance of Mr. Highet's prejudice, we may take his excited description of Carducci's ode *To Satan*, which was written in 1863. Mr. Highet fails to mention the mere fact that the Italian poet wrote it when he was only twenty-eight and that it was largely a protest against political oppression.

The later chapters are more influenced by contemporary fashion than by a true sense of perspective. We have, for instance, a section entitled *The Symbolist Poets and James Joyce*. But to involve the Irish writer in classical tradition because he borrowed the mere framework of the *Odyssey* is surely to beg the question. American interest in contemporary literature is shown in the last section which deals with the reinterpretation of classical myths by French writers, such as Gide, Cocteau, Giraudoux, Anouilh, Sartre and Camus. As Mr. Highet has not explained fully the great French classic tradition, some of his readers may fail to understand why contemporary dramatists are refashioning that tradition for themselves.

A. C.

NOVALIS: HYMNS TO THE NIGHT. Translated by Mabel Cotterell. With an Introduction and Appreciation by August Closs. Phoenix Press. 7s. 6d.

Friedrich von Hardenberg, better known as Novalis, is regarded as the most inspired poet of German Romanticism. He died of consumption at the early age of twenty-nine, leaving a few poems and the fragmentary novel, *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*—an allegory in which is described the spiritual quest of the Blue Flower. But the intense mysticism of Novalis has had an extraordinary influence, and that influence can be traced, for example, in Wagner and Maeterlinck. As Dr. Closs points out in his interesting Introduction to the present volume, Novalis combined mysticism with practicality, and was as interested in the development of science as was Goethe. When he was twenty-three he fell in love and the experience awakened his poetic powers. Sophie von Kühn, who is idealised as Mathilde in the novel, was only thirteen years of age, and some notes which the poet left indicate that she was not merely the dream maiden of romantic convention. "She wishes to please everyone . . . her coyness and yet innocent truthfulness . . . her tobacco-smoking . . . her outspokenness towards her father . . . her confirmation . . . her face during obscene stories, her talent to imitate." Sophie died soon, but despite his idealistic passion for her, Novalis became engaged to another girl in less than two years after her death. We may conclude, therefore, that, despite his cult of the next world, he was not indifferent to the pleasures of this existence.

Novalis wrote his *Hymns to the Night* about 1798, and they were published in 1800 in their original form of rhythmic prose. The version in free verse, translated now for the first time, was discovered in manuscript form in the Novalis

archives only in 1901. These Hymns, according to Dr. Closs, represent not only the finest product of German Romanticism, but belong with Hölderlin's and Goethe's works to the rarest treasures of European lyrical poetry. Night, according to Novalis, is the way to inner being, the way to poetry, to creation. Love, Death and Night merge into this one great conception. Night transforms all things again into a new conscious existence. The poems end in a Christian paean, for, ignoring the historic feuds which have rent Christianity for so many centuries, the poet sees Europe reunited by a pleasant, yet lonely religion of ecstasy. For the convenience of readers, the text of *Hymnen an die Nacht* is printed with Miss Mabel Cotterell's translation on the opposite pages.

One cannot help feeling, however, that this mystical poem, from the literary point of view, belongs very much to the early romantic period. Like many other mystics who ignore the mere demands of the poetic medium, Novalis took hastily the abstract and generalised diction which was in vogue.

The Night is here—
 Rapt away is my soul—
 Finished the earthly way,
 Once more art thou mine.
 I gaze into the depths of thy dark eyes,
 See naught but love and blissfulness therein;
 We sink upon Night's altar,
 Softest couch—
 The veil is shed,
 And kindled by the warm impress
 There glows
 The pure flame
 Of the sweet sacrifice.

Owing to the excess of the romantic movement and consequent reaction, these invocations fail to stir in us any particular response. The Hymns, no doubt, are of historic importance since they represent the mystical phase of the romantic era. But abstract diction, through over-use, no longer stimulates as fervently the emotions and the imagination.

M. D.

THE ARCHAISM OF IRISH TRADITION. By Myles Dillon. The Sir John Rhys Memorial Lecture British Academy 1947. From the Proceedings of the British Academy. Vol. XXXIII. Geoffrey Cumberlege. 4s.

More than a century has passed since Franz Bopp demonstrated the Indo-European character of the Celtic dialects, and other pioneers, including Zeuss and Sir John Rhys, have also explored the subject: yet the entire matter is still obscure and we must be content with hint and speculation. Dr. Myles Dillon endeavours to show, within the limitations of a brief lecture, that certain features of Irish tradition indicate that our country, on the margin of the Indo-European area, has preserved Indo-European characteristics now lost in most of the other regions of the west. He contends that in social organization, in language and in literature, the peculiar character of the Irish evidence is due, not to the influence of a pre-Celtic substratum, as has sometimes been suggested, nor to drastic innovation, but to the conservatism of our island.

Following the views which Dr. Binchy expressed recently, he finds certain similarities between the brehon laws and the brahmanical code of India. Stokes long ago pointed out the use both in Ireland and the East of fasting on the threshold as a means of enforcing a legal claim. Dr. Dillon deals with another similarity, the Act of Truth, based on a belief in the magic power of the truth. He compares several ancient Gaelic stories of this kind with the famous story of Nala and Damayanto, which is to be found in the great Indian epic *Mahabharata*. Rewards, too, for the hearing of a poetic story were as well-known in Ireland as in India and were parodied delightfully in the satirical *Vision of Mac Con Glinne*. In his pursuit of analogies, Dr. Dillon suggests that the *geis* or taboo may be an extension of the belief in the magic power of truth. But taboo and totemism bring us, surely, into a more generalised region of primitive belief. The speculations of our scholars are so fascinating that we would not wish them to stop. We may add that the *Mesca Ulad*, or *Intoxication of the Ulstermen*, one of our earliest stories, displays, particularly towards the climax, another aspect of oriental imagination. M. D.

FORMAL SPRING. French Renaissance Poems with Translations By R. N. Currey. Geoffrey Cumberlege. Oxford University Press. 10s. 6d.

In his preface to these forty poems of the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Mr. Currey explains that his 'primary object in translating them has always been to convey some of the pleasure felt on reading the original poems.' Readers who have enjoyed his translations in this and other magazines will already know that he has been remarkably successful. If, as he says, Rossetti's translation of Villon's *Ballade du Temps Jadis* is one with the rarest of qualities—a life of its own—the same can be said of many of his own renderings. It is an essential of any good translation of verse shaped within a framework of rigid forms that the form should, as far as usage and language allow, follow the original. The poverty of rhymes puts even the original poet in English to all kinds of shifts to complete a *Rondel* or a *Ballade* and the difficulty in making an unforced rendering from the French is enormous. Mr. Currey has made it even more difficult for himself by refusing, unlike the majority of earlier translators, from Rossetti to Paul Hookham, to admit such useful aids to rhyme and metre as 'I wis,' 'Perdie,' 'bedight,' and all the pseudo-medievals apparatus. He has managed for the most part to employ an unaffected English of to-day, neither slangy nor 'poetic.' As a result he is successful with Villon in particular and he avoids alike the extremes of Henley and of Rossetti. Rossetti's version of the *Ballade du Temps Jadis* is in itself a lovely thing and rests safely established in the affection of countless readers. Mr. Currey's is a much closer translation and is free of counterfeit medievalism. There are gains and losses. His opening lines, for instance,

O tell me where and to what land
Has lovely Roman Flora gone

certainly translate Villon's

Dictes moy ou, n'en quel pays,
Est Flora la belle Rommaine,

more accurately than did Rossetti's

Tell me now in what hidden way is
Lady Flora the lovely Roman.

All the same, he was forced here (and elsewhere) to weaken the stark quality of Villon's line with that redundant 'O.' And again, in translating,
 Qu' Englois brulerent a Rouan

as

Burned at Rouen in English fires

he was driven to the double defeat of an indirect expression and a false rhyme.

Yet, not only in the Villon poems, but in almost all of the others one ceases to regret the impossible and accepts instead with admiration the skill with which he has combined close rendering with natural diction and sometimes with beauty. His *Lament of The Old Woman Remembering Her Youth* (he does not accept 'armouress' for 'hëaulmiere') is a fine thing, alive with much of the bitter directness of the original, but perhaps the most entirely satisfying piece is from Charles d'Orléans,—the *Ballade for Peace*. Here, as an example, is one stanza:

Pray prelates, and all men of sanctity,
 Friars and monks, who sleep in idleness,
 And scholars, and all learned company,
 For war must always mean that studies cease,
 And churches are destroyed that none redress,
 And services neglected in that day;
 Now that your peace and quiet have gone their way
 Pray so that God hear soon, not shy or coy,
 But as the church has ordered you to pray,
 And pray for peace, the very heart of joy.

Alas, for the ending of the third last line!—but it serves to point the difficulty which, otherwise, one were in danger of forgetting.

There are seven translations from Ronsard, including an excellently vigorous rendering of the *Építaphe de François Rabelais* and four quite delightful stanzas from the *Ode* beginning

Verson ces roses pres de ce vin,
 Pres de ce vin version ces roses,
 Et boivons l'un à l'autre, . . .

Mr. Currey was probably wise, in this particular poem, not to accept the challenge of the first two lines and to shatter the formality with his

Scatter by this jar of wine
 Roses, in the scent of roses
 Pledge one to the other . . .

Among the du Bellay translations he includes both the *Építaph on a Pet Dog* and the *Építaph on a Pet Cat*. Charming though they are one suspects that much of the charm derives from the mere fact that the language is medieval French. Translation into modern English brings a hint of banality. They are the longest poems in the book and one would willingly have spared one of them for the sake of more Charles d'Orléans, Villon or Ronsard.

But, really, it is wrong to complain of omissions or inclusions while enjoying this choice collection of period pieces which begins with the cold formality of Guillaume de Machault and gives us, before its conclusion, one of the happiest translations imaginable from the passionate Louis Labé.

The original poems throughout are printed opposite the translations and there is a short biographical note on each poet. Two untranslated stanzas of *La Belle Hëaulmiere* are printed in an appendix which also includes unattempted parts of other poems or else a note as to where the complete poems can be found.

W. P. M.

THE MYSTERY OF KEATS. By John Middleton Murry. Peter Nevill. 12s. 6d.

When Mr. Middleton Murry writes about Keats it is not in ink, but with consecrated oil; and the ordinary reader may feel that Keats ought sometimes in his letters, if not in his poetry, to be allowed the luxury of self-pity, the relief of melodrama. "There seems never to have been a moment at which Keats was less than the whole of himself, or acted or wrote from less." With this intensity, Mr. Murry examines, for example, *On Visiting the Tomb of Burns*, and sees in the line: 'Sickly imagination and sick pride' "the pride of a preconceived imagination, and it is sick, because it fails to make the 'self-destroying' surrender to the thing that is." It is possible, however, that Keats, thinking of the dying Tom, wrote it and the line: 'All is cold beauty; pain is never done' out of the brittle shell in which the sensitive vainly hide from engulfing pain, and from which they look with hostility at what their senses remind them they have previously held precious. One feels nothing but blank astonishment, though, in the chapter on Fanny Keats, admirably describing the relationship between Keats and his sister, when Mr. Murry writes of her amiable weakness, as an old woman in Spain, to possess widow's caps from England like those worn by Queen Victoria: "It was, in its own order, as authentic a manifestation of Keats's spirit as the manuscript of *The Ode to Autumn*."

It is one of Mr. Murry's great merits as a critic that he never hesitates to admit his mistakes. Here, he rejoices that new evidence makes it possible for him to reverse the judgment he passed on Fanny Brawne in *Keats and Shakespeare*. And in a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* (it being too late to make a correction in this book), he refers to his interpretation of the *Lines to Fanny*. For example, "The monstrous region is a limbo to which he is condemned by the effort to assert his poetic imagination against his love. He escapes from it only by surrendering his imagination to his love. But in that case the mystery of his friends remains: and we may have to regard the poem as itself an example of passion clogging the wings of imagination." He now accepts the explanation suggested to him by Professor Häusermann "that Keats was describing North America, where his very dearest friends—George and Georgiana—were, as Keats then saw their plight, exiled, stranded and doomed . . . the poem shows that his anxiety about his brother and sister-in-law was at least as deep and disturbing as his anxiety about the outcome of his love for Fanny Brawne, to which he had now surrendered himself." If this exemplifies the excesses into which Mr. Murry's attitude to Keats can occasionally lead him, it also shows that his devotion is of the quality to demand from him—and receive—an unflinching integrity.

He analyses with great sensitiveness some of the poems, examining all the circumstances and thought from which the verses sprang. To do so, he believes, substantiates "the theory that the composition of a *great* poem is but a final conscious act supervening upon a long process of unconscious elaboration." There are illuminating chapters on the influence of Milton, Wordsworth, and Blake. A central theme in them, as in the rest of the book, is that "There is revealed in the life and work of Keats—I know not how—a strange and predestined identity of Truth and Beauty." He gives profound consideration to what the words Beauty, Truth and Imagination meant to Keats—especially in the chapter on *The Ode on a Grecian Urn*. After noting the diversity of opinion among critics as to the poem's merits, he gives as his own judgment: "The

poem, as a whole, advances on strong and delicate waves of the pure sensuous imagination. It ends dissonantly with a stark enunciation which, to that part of the human mind which is aroused by stark enunciation, must be a baffling paradox . . . It is not 'all we know'; and some of us do not know it at all. But Keats's meaning is unmistakeable. If we know that 'Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty,' we have attained the top-most stretch of human knowledge; we know, as it were, the secret—the one thing needful." With due deference to him and the other eminent critics, one wonders why more attention has not been given to Keats's use of pronouns in the poem. It is accepted that, till the end, the second person, singular and plural, refers to the Urn and its figures, and 'ours' to men. Why then believe that in the last line Keats abruptly allows 'ye' to stand for mankind? Is not the feeling of disharmony due to a mistaken idea that Keats, dissociating himself from his fellow-creatures, has suddenly decided to add to the Urn's message? Might not the proper reading be: Keats receives through the Imagination (here symbolized by the Urn and its figures) what is for him the ultimate poetic experience. Emotionally this awareness, or vision, of frustration as fulfilment is Beauty; to his mind it is Truth; but emotions and mind are unified in the experience. It might be compared with Rilke's "inner and outer together into one uninterrupted space, in which, mysteriously protected, only one single spot of purest, deepest consciousness remained." Keats affirms that the Imagination has fulfilled its real function ('Some shape of beauty moves away the pall from our dark spirits'). And it is of the Imagination (under the symbol of the Urn and its figures) that he testifies: 'That is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.'

The aim of this companion volume to *Keats and Shakespeare* is to reveal "the prophetic element in his work and life. . . . I know of no life which gives me so directly the sense of revelation, of the unutterable being uttered through it. Yet equally it makes on me the impression of a life of singular simplicity, completely devoid and indeed impatient of complexity." Whether one accepts this conclusion or not, one must acknowledge in Mr. Murry a devotee whose commentary has been dictated by unrivalled intuition and impassioned sympathy.

L. H.

COUNTRY AND TOWN IN IRELAND UNDER THE GEORGES. By Constantia Maxwell.

Dundalk: The Dundalgan Press. 21s. net.

This delightfully entertaining and informative book appeared in 1940, when a *Dublin Magazine* reviewer recommended it as "a book to be re-read and cherished"; but, as almost the whole of that edition was destroyed by fire, it could not, of course, have had the public attention it deserved. The new issue, with minor amendments and additional illustrations, is an example of handsome and faultless production by an Irish publishing-house. The varying grades of social life and economic conditions during Ireland's most interesting period are presented with that clarity and exactness which distinguish the works of so diligent and impartial a historian, one who enjoys the unique quality of pleasing the general reader with a fully documented story about people and the houses—cottages, as well as mansions—wherein they dwelt, about how they lived or existed. The national, political story is one which has been overwritten, and here the author avoids it, unless it serves to explain an origin or to point a biographical anecdote. Dr. Maxwell is very impartial and far-searching in

gathering her material, and she gives to the labourer and the cottier—their budgets and rents and their conditions of employment—an importance proportionate to the eccentricities and extravagances of the gentry. In relating the stories of their manners and ways of life, the author imparts the atmosphere and the ethos of Georgian Ireland. Additionally valuable are the well-produced pictures of interiors and exteriors of some of the family mansions, about many of which we might repeat John Wesley's cry (when he visited Moyra House), "Must this, too, pass away?" Dr. Maxwell has done well in putting these on permanent, pictorial record.

J. R. H.

QUAKER SOCIAL HISTORY. 1669-1738. By Arnold Lloyd. Introduction by Professor Herbert G. Wood. Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd. 21s.

Dr. Lloyd states in his preface that the discovery in 1943 of George Fox's MS. "Advices and Queries" of 1681, and a comparison of it with the first official edition (1738) of the Friends' Book of Discipline showed that the generally accepted conclusion as to the evolution of Quaker church government required modification. To determine how far Fox was responsible for the system, and to trace its development, he undertook his extensive and very fine study of the social history of the Quakers from 1669-1738. Much new material has been used; and the conclusion reached by Dr. Lloyd is that: "The system of Church government which the Quakers used in 1738 was, in fact, evolved in the years immediately following 1675. It is a by-product of the fight for legal protection against persecution."

The plain necessity to deal with the practical problems of helping the needy and those in prison, of raising funds for legal expenses and missionary work, and of advising on the practice of Quakerism in the varied circumstances of daily life might be described as the very foundations of the church in its outward aspect. The spiritual fervour of the Quakers, their ideals and sober common-sense, their powers of organization and forthright courage, the part taken by women in the meetings, their conception of the rights of the poor, of minorities and of the persecuted, the quality of their leaders; all are presented against the widely hostile background of the period. *Quaker Social History* is a valuable and fully documented book; it is also a gravely eloquent tribute to the qualities that have made the Society of Friends so universally respected.

THE PEOPLE OF GREAT RUSSIA. A psychological study. By Geoffrey Gorer and John Rickman. Cresset Press. 10s. 6d.

The two authors of this book do not appear to have collaborated, but to have converged together, with difference due to elevation, with texts for further elucidation of the Russian character. Dr. Rickman's main contribution is a set of 10 sketches of his experiences amongst the peasants of the central Steppe, Quaker Relief doctor that he was, between 1916 and the terminating appearance in his villages of the Bolshevik agents in 1918. These vivid short narratives are each a carefully completed picture of some local and typical circumstance of life in village Russia.

Mr. Gorer, with hardly any original experience of Russian life, but a trained anthropologist, then takes up a different pen, chiefly to trace, in psychoanalytic

terms, the concomitants of the Russian matrons' custom of swaddling infants during the first ten months of their existence. This swathing or swaddling is an operation which consists in firmly binding the body and limbs at once with yards of narrow bandage, in such a way that the child cannot move anything but its eyes. (These eyes, in the 7,000 hours of surgical immobility, which do not include the few dozen hours of cleansing and feeding, are all the time they are open, working and training to become the sympathique and significant Russian eyes, he thinks it important to tell us). The psychoanalyst is of the opinion that this discipline, established for so long, and so universal amongst the peasants before the soviet began to unsay every tradition, had a great deal of capital consequence for the Russian character. Exercised without cessation or exception on the plastic, porous bodies of each future generation of peasants, an overwhelming proportion of the people, it was the making of the Russians. Swaddling and this "national" character are given as self-evident and coexistent; he usually relates them only in the way of technical speculation, except when he is too concise.

Mr. Gorer says that there is evidence of a relative lack of deep emotional attachment on the part of the Russian peasant mama for her child, and of a "low intensity" in the "normal relationships" between it and both parents. When not being nursed, the children are the charge of a grandmother or great-aunt. If the baby cries while the mother is away, its mouth is stopped with a comforter, this being a ball of moist food in a moistened rag. Swaddled, the child is a rigid object, readily transportable, summary, isolable without danger from its own detrimental gestures. "Painful internal physiological feelings" pass it by—that is, for the want of its being instructed by any experience of getting them noticed. Its external universe is as undifferentiated as the interior side of an eggshell; the child's emotions are merged into one by being unexpressed in leaps, wriggles and hand-swipes; there is nothing for it to eat, suck, pull, push, and in a word, the infant still has no body, except during the marvellous epiphanies of being suckled and bathed.

"And it is to be assumed," says the author, "that this inhibition of movement is felt to be extremely painful and frustrating, and is responded to with intense and destructive rage which cannot be adequately expressed physically. This rage, it is assumed"—(in developing the discussion)—"is directed at the constraint, rather than at the people who constrain the infant. Since the infant's exploration of the universe is very limited it would seem that the identification of the people who constrain him is impeded; the more so since, as has already been pointed out, the actual swaddling is done in a very impersonal manner with little contact between the swaddler and the infant who is handled and turned around as though it were a rigid and inanimate object." (Page 123).

Persons not strangers to the process of psychoanalysis will expect that this state of affairs in early education is heavy with possibilities. If they have also been inside the unique world of Dostoevsky, they will already be apprehensive of the little Russian inside his cocoon. *Docti* of both schools will know how that sensual isolation must lead direct to a dread of mental isolation, and a consequent aggregation with the other chicks (and woe to the sole dissident!), and there will be needed no more than a hint about "feelings of pervasive and unfocussed guilt," and "diffuse feelings of fear derived from projections of infantile

hostility." They have seen the protocolary stiffness of Mr. Molotov in the cinema, those arms of his like a stevedore's halting between two similar jobs, those hands like suspended balehooks—.

In spite of its long tenuous threads of psychoanalytic language, and the frequent importation of some rapacious formula which reproves the candid without winning the sceptic, it is a book of good faith, filled with relevant information and profitable judgments about the modern Russians. On this account it might very well be studied by any one who is curious or urgent to be able to form a conception (freed from the revolting distractions of politics) of what the Russians are, and what they are about. If the reader doesn't like them at all he will go a long way with the author, who doesn't like them much, and will be no more involved if, while the book is open, he takes off his hat and looks civil, all the better to know why he needn't like them.

D. M.

FIVE NOVELS BY RONALD FIRBANK. Duckworth. 18s.

Ronald Firbank's novels, like all true poetry, defy the analysis of criticism. Either you accept them or you don't. They are unlike anything else in English literature, perhaps in any literature. So airy is his touch that after him, as Carl van Vechten has said, even Max Beerbohm seems a little studied. So free is his matter of ethical or moral purpose that the spirit of the nineties mounts a pulpit. His art is mild and sweet and witty, and almost anything said about it must be dull. It is not satire, for it has knowledge of no possible state, social or moral, other than its own, and though one may think of Beardsley's *Venus and Tannhäuser*, it is only for a moment: the wings of his mischief are too fragile and too aimless for the gross weight of evil and his flowers of impropriety dance in too fresh an air to smell of sin. Sir Osbert Sitwell tells in his preface, and others have told elsewhere, how Firbank would be suddenly convulsed with helpless laughter at the comicality of his own thoughts, and all through these stories that laughter echoes, self-delighting, self-delighted and just a little insane. His oddity of thought is inseparable from its oddity of form, light, colourful, unbelievably swift and unpredictable, and his dialogue has all the miraculous agility of women's conversation. It is his women who delight us—those inconsequent, ruthless, pathetic, ridiculous creatures of his vision. One can see him eyeing them like another poet who saw them

stand in sunlight preening like a bird
Above still water, or, when rain looms dark,
Crowd into some tall doorway wing by wing
Like peacocks under yew trees in the park,
Delicate and delightful and absurd

Only, for Firbank, the absurdity was such that he hugged himself in spasms of uncontrollable laughter on a bench in Battersea at the mere sight of one who stood for a moment to make up her face. Nothing but lengthy quotation could convey how a frolic wit darts in and out and a strange impalpable beauty of phrase plays upon situations absurd, unthinkable, even obscene, and renders them as gay and harmless as butterflies.

There are five of Firbank's novels in this Omnibus—*Valmouth*, *The Flower Beneath The Foot*, *Prancing Nigger*, *Concerning the Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli* and *The Artificial Princess*. The last of these, included by way of intro-

duction to the Furbankian mysteries, is apprentice work and it would have been better to risk all and give something more essentially his own—*Vainglory*, perhaps, or *Caprice*. Perhaps the best of the five is *The Flower Beneath The Foot*, with its sad little Ruritania tragedy, and perhaps the wittiest and most shocking (and it is shocking to those who cannot share its irresponsibility) concerns the eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli. The most successful commercially was *Prancing Nigger*, a tale of negro tragi-comedy which is almost a "social document" and was popular in America. The most bewildering to readers looking for a steady light to lead him somewhere is *Valmouth*, a pastiche of brilliant colours upon a sober background of rural England. In all of them wit breaks suddenly out of silliness and beauty out of eccentricity, while the irresponsible gaiety of a spectator uninvolved himself in the absurdity of life makes all a work of unimpassioned charm.

W. P. M.

ALPHONSE DAUDET. By G. V. Dobie. Nelson. 21s.

The biographer of a man of letters is at present inclined to choose for *mise en scène* the bedroom as often as the library. But if Mrs. Dobie has elected to remain downstairs it is from an intelligent interest in what she has found there.

Alphonse Daudet learnt from his friend Edmond de Goncourt to fill his 'petits cahiers' copiously, though in his case it was with day to day impressions. These, and his bitter experiences as a child and as a half-starved young writer in Paris, his acquaintance with the exotic luxury of the de Morny household and friendship with famous literary men and artists, the political and social events of the period, his warm sympathies for the under-dog, his malice and over-sensitiveness, the passionate devotion to Provence: all formed the texture and the pattern of his work and are, therefore, what Mrs. Dobie examines. Her scrutiny is a sympathetic one of the delicate boy with his uncontrolled temper, and truaneries so adroitly served by an ingenious imagination; the humiliation of poverty for the schoolboy and reluctant usher; the passionate love for literature shared with his brother and their literary aspirations in Lyons and later in Paris; the first timid entrance into the salons, and plunge into a bohemian life. Daudet did not forget the sharpness, despair and occasional ecstasy of his past; and if he was able to write of his childhood with humour as well as pathos, his studies of Bohemia were those of a man who had never lost the bitter taste of shame and disgust. The chapters on the Duc de Morny, national disasters, travels in Algeria and Corsica, domestic life, and the inspiration of the Provençal Renaissance are also careful to emphasize the material he used so vividly in his descriptions of the Paris of the Second Empire and Third Republic, and in his portrayal of Provence. It was material too that he turned to brilliant account as a raconteur.

Mrs. Dobie's consideration of his work as novelist, short-story writer, dramatist and poet is more an outline than a critical analysis. Sartre has said: "Nowhere in his book can the writer meet with anything but his own knowledge, his will, his projects, in short, himself"—and he suggests that the reader is his dialectical counterpart. Doubtless more remains for other readers to discover of Daudet's inner life; but the present portrait reveals the man as he appeared to his contemporaries in the literary world and to his devoted friends, and its background has admirably balanced detail and fidelity of atmosphere.

HORACE PLUNKETT, An Anglo-American Irishman. By Margaret Digby. Cr. 8vo. Pp. 314 + XIII. Oxford. Basil Blackwell. 1949. 15s. net.

Many of us who knew Plunkett often wondered when there would be a statue erected to him in Ireland. Having read this excellent biography by Miss Digby, we may wonder all the more. There have been few people who have done more for our country and for peace—and the Nobel Peace Prize might easily have been his. He was a very great man, full of courage, consistency of purpose and entirely unselfish. In his Oxford days he began to get away from religious dogma and while remaining intellectually interested in religion, he remained agnostic. For recreation, he was a keen chess player, an ardent follower to hounds, and a lover of the theatre. His early training as a rancher in Wyoming fitted him excellently for the enormous part he was to take in the agricultural development of Ireland; this early training is described in an admirable manner by the authoress. In 1908, he was convinced that Ireland should have self government. Politics interested him and he became a Member of the British Parliament as a Liberal Unionist in 1892.

The story of the cooperative movement and agricultural organisation reads like a play and the reader will learn much about the history of Ireland from a perusal of the chapters devoted to this part of Plunkett's life.

As we read through the book we are filled with increased amazement, for among his offices and honours were:—Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction; Fellow of the Royal Society; many honorary degrees such as D.C.L. Oxford, LL.D. Trinity; and all the time he never stopped working. One of the tragedies of his life was the burning of Kilteragh: he built this mansion with the intention of making it his permanent home where he could entertain visitors who were interested in Ireland generally, and the co-operative movement in particular. It was burnt down as a so-called political act because he was a Senator! This was the thanks to a man who had worked dispassionately, without any wish for fee or reward, for his country.

The story of the Irish Convention is an outstanding chapter in Irish history. The *Irish Statesman*, in conjunction with the *Irish Homestead*, for 7½ years did much for the country. With AE. as Editor and many stalwarts behind him, this venture of Plunkett's will long be remembered.

Plunkett learned to fly at the age of 75. His was a personality that did not attract at first meeting, but the longer one knew him the more one appreciated him.

Miss Digby has drawn a sketch of this remarkable man from every angle and we can strongly recommend her work to our readers. The production by Blackwell and the illustrations are commendable.

B. S.

LES ILES BRITANNIQUES ET LA REVOLUTION FRANÇAISE, 1789-1803. Jules Dechamps. Brussels, La Renaissance du Livre.

The pair of decades in English history least interesting to the delving and puzzling kind of historian are probably those joined together by the Peace of Amiens. Because it was then as if the Muse had already acquired the complicity of her audience, as if the motive forces of primary actions were spoken out in soliloquies by the great figures, during whose absence from the stage Romance

and Rhetoric shared the management of the piece. When, in September 1766, Voltaire wrote: "Reckon the world to be a great shipwreck, and that the motto men live under is: every one for himself," he had more readers in England than in France, and it was the English imagination that was fired, instead of only frenzied, by the Paris insurrection of July, 1789. The sensuality of her eloquent youth was roused,—

" Before them shone a glorious world
Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled
To music suddenly—",

and ideas which had been born in the sleep of the millions, scarcely arriving at consciousness for a moment in the great social crises of the century, were knocked wide awake for ever. Of that time, Lord Cockburn wrote: "Everything harked back to the French Revolution, which, during more than twenty years, was, or came in one way or another to be, all, or almost all. Not alone this thing or that, but literally everything, bathed in the light of that unique event."

Professor Dechamps has given an erudite, picturesque, moving, biased volume on the social, political and spiritual stresses made in Great Britain and in Ireland by the Revolution. It is learned in the quantity of contemporaneous material found out and turned over, as well in the adroit management of it as in the disposition of his emphasis on those often tiny events and fugitive writings the most significant for revealing the tone of the age and forming the unity of the book. Picturesque by reason of style and presentation, in chapters where, with the least insistence on the part of the author, British and Irish readers must at once recognise the men engaged. Moving it must be, because those years, for Ireland above all, were retrograde and disastrous, enlightened by no grandeur but individual impulse and individual sacrifice. Biased it is because the author does not trace the ghostly meridian of "objectivity" and absence. Anticipated in this by Albert Sorel, his historical judgment bears towards Napoleon as liberator, and thus as always maintaining a specific character (whatever personal ascendancy and glory he gained, and whatever the variations of his posture and means) as defender of the French nation and the fruits of its Revolution. So he cannot choose but stand the British oligarchs in a diabolic contrast face to face with the man they dreaded, their "jacobin," the "*unus qui nobis*" who achieved the stability, unanimity and prosperity the oligarchs *must* destroy, of the Consular Republic. Necessity was for the British system to perish, if that deadly radiation continued from a pacified France, radiation long as the globe is wide, of ideas and images. Any who were then unconvinced must shudder afterwards, when given the *mercantile* potentiality and physical extent of France as subjects of further reflection.

The Peace of emergency was signed in the autumn of 1801. No evidence ever showed that Napoleon began to understand his northern enemies; he was a Plutarch fellow, of the Roman hue, static and classic as his numerous Carrara busts. But there were so many things he could not understand. Humble, military, solitary, in his exile on Saint Helena, he dictated his *Memoirs*, and one who reads them from end to end, lying in wait for a telling gleam of retrospective sagacity or insight, might be forgiven for asking: what *did* he understand?

Fourteen excellent plates, from caricatures and portraits of the time, adorn a generous and desirable book.

HUMAN RIGHTS. Prepared by UNESCO and Introduced by Jacques Maritain.
Allan Wingate. 15/-

In 1947 UNESCO asked various experts belonging to Member-States to give their views on the problems connected with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights then being prepared. Appendix I of this symposium—chosen from the replies received—emphasizes that

“The world of man is at a critical stage in its political, social and economic evolution. If it is to proceed further on the path towards unity, it must develop a common set of ideas and principles. One of those is a common formulation of the rights of man. This common formulation must by some means reconcile the various divergent or opposing formulations now in existence. It must further be sufficiently definite to have real significance both as an inspiration and as a guide to practice, but also sufficiently general and flexible to apply to all men, and to be capable of modification to suit peoples at different stages of social and political development while yet retaining significance for them and their aspirations.”

The essays deal with general problems, and also with such subjects as the influence of science and education, and the position of primitive peoples and law-breakers. The views presented have not all been finally accepted by UNESCO; but they have been printed because of their stimulating interest. That the eminent contributors include Jacques Maritain, Harold Laski, Mahatma Gandhi, Benedetto Croce, Margery Fry, Chung-Shu Lo, Humayun Kabir and Boris Tchechko indicates how varied and valuable are the opinions expressed, and what serious consideration the book deserves.

CHILDREN OF EUROPE. By Dorothy Macardle. Gollancz. 21s.

In this factual study of the children of Europe, their terrible experiences during the war years, Dorothy Macardle gives, first, a detailed examination of the Nazi outlook as applied to the schools and youth movements of Germany. For the first time in the modern world the whole resources of a state were used to pervert a generation. Boys were made to glorify brutality, to regard compassion as weakness. Viciousness was elevated as something to be aimed at by boys and girls alike. In these pages Miss Macardle tells of the dismay of parents who found their children subjected to these debasing influences. She speaks of teachers who faced suffering and death rather than submit. The Nazis made no secret of their beliefs and practices. Even more amazing than the German nation accepting these sub-human standards was the lack of effective condemnation—and even tacit approval—from outside. During the earlier years the Resistance movement fighting against Nazism was in Germany itself.

When Dorothy Macardle comes to tell of the Nazi occupation in Czecho-Slovakia, in Poland and in Europe generally, the horrors arise naturally from the Nazi ideas inculcated at home. Invasion must always produce suffering. But here was a creed of deliberate cruelty and extermination imposed on “lesser breeds.” To force Czech teachers to try to Germanize Czech children by means of ferocious repression seems not only wrong, but stupid. The destruction of villages—such as Lidice—where the buildings as well as the people were wiped out, was a vain attempt to re-make humanity on a Nazi model.

In Poland, too, the Nazi methods achieved fantastic and fiendish ingenuity.

The plans devised to reduce the population—apart from killing and starving—must be read to be believed. Yet countries like Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, which felt the full weight of Nazi repression, were really in a better plight than German opponents of Nazism. They were outside the Nazi ideology and so had a centre of resistance.

Miss Macardle deals with each country in turn and shows how the chaos of war, added to sadistic invention, affected the children. There were degrees of brutality, according to racial concept; Poles and Jews were outside the pale. In their case there was a reversal of all human standards. Children, women, the weak and the old were attacked, hunted down, exterminated. In Norway and Denmark other methods were tried as Norwegian blood was declared to be "racially valuable." But it came to much the same in the end when the people refused to be dominated. The story of the struggle of the teachers—and even the school-children—in Norway is most inspiring. After 13,000 teachers had been arrested and many of them treated with great brutality, every teacher read a declaration to his class (on April 9, 1942) in these terms:—

"The teacher's vocation, however, is not only to give the children knowledge. He must also teach the children to believe in and desire that which is just and true. He is, therefore, unable to teach anything which is in conflict with his conscience without betraying his calling. Anyone who does so is committing a wrong both against the pupils whom he should lead and against himself. That, I promise you I will never do . . ."

Incidentally, the book contains many fine examples of human integrity. Men and women took risks and suffered while protecting children from that obsession of brutality which overtook the world. This is a comprehensive and scholarly book, based largely on personal experience, full of knowledge, discussing the methods that are now being adopted to rehabilitate the children physically, mentally and spiritually. Yet its most lasting impression is, I think, the widespread suffering which may be caused by people who are not bad in themselves, lacking the moral courage to make a stand against evil.

R. M. Fox.

CROWDED COMPANY. By Philip Gibbs. Illustrated by the Author. Allan Wingate. 15s.

The opening chapters of these reminiscences have an inconsequent air as if every random memory were allowed to bubble to the surface in the hope that the reader will enjoy a sparkling vintage. Queen Alexandra chats brightly, Sir Thomas Lipton warns Sir Philip against princesses, Dr. Crippen's young woman is interviewed, Lord Lothian dozes at luncheon, G. K. Chesterton pants on staircases, John Galsworthy adores his wife, Vesta Tilley remains light as gossamer. By the time the club is reached where H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, Somerset Maugham, Stephen Mackenna and others foregathered, one is reconciled to a ramble in the past that is concerned chiefly with snapshots of things and with generalities.

"The conversation was never dull . . . H. G. Wells with his high-pitched voice and an inexhaustible reservoir of humour and fantasy would lead some abstract argument into realms of imagination, while Arnold Bennett, never a glib speaker because of his stutter, would break silence by some sentence of devastating criticism or common sense."

The effect is that of a rapid turning of pages in illustrated journals. Sometimes the skimming process is halted and the reader invited to look more closely at pictures of the Edwardian era with its pomp and circumstance and its appalling slums; to inspect the London and the English countryside of two world wars; to note in the gossip columns odd anecdotes and revealing glimpses of artists and writers. The pages are turned backwards and forwards without warning so that often one wonders confusedly where one is supposed to be in time. The same method takes the reader over Europe and to New York.

Sir Philip admits to being a bad proof-reader; it is unfortunate, for some sentences decidedly need revision. His gifts, however, as a descriptive reporter are notable and even those who prefer more solid treatment will appreciate his skill, his shrewd and lively view of the world, and his humanity.

LABOUR AND EASTER WEEK. By James Connolly. Three Candles Press. 7s. 6d. net.

No one who wishes to understand the thoughts and feelings underlying the 1916 insurrection can afford to do without this selection from the writings of James Connolly, which is up to the usual high standard of production of The Three Candles Press. The volume contains an interesting introduction by William O'Brien, who was in close contact with Connolly. He tells us of various people and committees concerned with the insurrectionary movement. I note that three names are mis-spelt, Major MacBride, Thomas Kane and Robert de Cœur. This is a trifle which can be rectified at the next printing.

What is more important is the question of why Connolly's teaching, as recorded in this book, has so far faded out of the Labour movement in the thirty years following his death. With his pivotal position, Mr. O'Brien should have been able to throw light on this matter. The story of Connolly's struggle to beat down the official opposition to the unfurling of the Green Flag over Liberty Hall is told in detail in the introduction. But I understand that there was similar opposition *after* the Rising to the displaying a banner there to commemorate the anniversary. This could, perhaps, be explained on the grounds of caution. But what is more difficult to explain is that Connolly's teaching of irreconcilable opposition to conscription under all circumstances; his support of women's rights; his stand for the right of labour organisation independent of State control, and his belief in a Socialist Workers' Republic, have all ceased to operate to any effective extent in the organisation he helped to build.

Take as an example this extract from "*Our Disappearing Liberties*":—

"When a man is ordered to take a deadly weapon and proceed to kill a human being with whom he believes he has no ground of quarrel, personal or national, if the fear of starvation makes him obey that order, then the person issuing that command is guilty of the foulest crime known to humanity—the murder of a human soul. Against such an attack upon the liberty of the individual we protest, and call upon all to protest. Conscription is bad, we hate the thought of it; but conscription is at least openly brutal; this conscription by starvation is foul with the foulness of Hell."

Talk about conscription to-day awakes only tepid response, not the fierce anger Connolly voiced. William O'Brien deserves credit for rescuing these

writings of Connolly from oblivion, but if the intention is to base Labour activities on Connolly's teachings in the future, it would seem that there is great leeway to make up. The selections in the book range from Connolly's *Workers' Republic* in 1898 to his final courtmartial statement. R. M. FOX.

CASSELL'S NEW ENGLISH DICTIONARY. 15th Edition. Edited and revised by Ernest A. Baker, Litt.D. and Arthur L. Hayward. London. Cassell & Co., Ltd. 17s. 6d. net.

This enlarged edition of the popular "Cassell's" fully justifies the claim that it is a reliable and up-to-date vocabulary of the English language. The volume contains more than 12,000 words, in 1,700 pages; and, apart from its lexicographical and etymological matter, it is an example of good printing and production, and wonderfully good value for so modest a cost. As well as all the words which may be employed in everyday speech and writing, with their acquisitions and modified meanings, we are given the scientific, technical and specialised terms likely to be used or sought for by the most exacting of readers and writers and students. In commercial circles, too, it will enlarge the wide circulation that it has had ever since the first "New English" appeared, in 1891. Although its contents have necessitated enlargement of the work, a new method of indicating derivatives and a systemised grouping of explanatory matter have saved space and so kept it to a practicable, workable size; and care has been taken to define alternatives and etymology and pronunciation, to show all accepted shades of meaning. The whole of the letterpress has been reset in bold, clear, readable type; and the rapidity and ease of reference mark a great advance in dictionary production.

HEAVENLY MANSIONS. By John Summerson. London. The Cresset Press. 21s. net.

This collection of ten essays is mainly an intensive study of architectural thought—the mind of the architect—and in expounding his fascinating subject the curator of the Soane Museum writes informally about varied aspects of the art, from the Doll's House—concept of the diminutive in building—to a new interpretation of the Gothic and the planning of a modern school. Succeeding styles and standards, or fashions, in architecture make an interesting study, and a thought-provoking one; and the Mind behind the Material would apply aptly to the author's approach to the works of great masters like Wood, Gandy, Butterfield and Wren, whose influences and methods are of more importance here than are the finished structures that are their real, material memorials; for who has not wondered, when viewing a noble building, "what was the mental aspect of him who designed that?" In writing about the present and the future and the "modern architecture which will be Architecture" the author examines and explains the analogy of abstract painting and the drawing board; and to express his argument he juxtaposes a plan by Le Carbusier and a pencil drawing by Picasso. The theme is traced back to Paris in the year 1863, to the appointment of Viollet-le-Duc to a chair at the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* and the exhibition of early works of Manet and Pissarro at the *Salon des Refusés*; and as the conclusion of this argument there is a forthright, sincerely reasoned essay, The Mischievous Analogy, which is a challenge to modern architectural thought. We are, it seems, entering the age of "the House as the Machine." The subtle and delicate

subject of the preservation of historical and artistic buildings in practical schemes of town planning is one in which all laymen will not be in agreement with the architect who would preserve Abbotsford—for its architecture, only—and apply to Keats' Grove the line which that poet wrote after his visit to Alloway:

" Cant! Cant! Cant! It is enough to give a Spirit the guts ache."

But, the author is identifying professional values, which are relative and complicated.

THE BEST OF TIMES. By Ludwig Bemelmans. An Account of Europe Revisited, with 50 colour and 110 black Illustrations by the author. The Cresset Press. 18/-

Mr. Bemelmans, who writes and paints for *The New Yorker*, *Vogue* and *Town and Country*, has brought to his illustrated account of a return journey to Europe in 1946 and 1947 all the sophistication, drollery, zest and economy that one expects. First he visits Paris, the city of black markets and still opulent restaurants, of sturdiness, and also of hunger and anger; then the Switzerland that runs so smoothly on tourists; and on to Austria and Bavaria—and here the memories of his youth and the ugly, pitiful present join in the terrible chapter on the old school-friend who had been in Dachau. There are descriptions of the Camargue, of Arles and Venice and the Ile d'Yeu designed to beguile his American readers; and of service in hotels, on boats, trains and aeroplanes as it appears to one who belongs to a family of innkeepers and has himself worked in New York hotels.

Mr. Bemelmans says in his preface that he set out to write a happy book but he warns the reader that he did not really succeed. The explanation is that while the author has a lively sense for the absurd, a love of adventure and the eye of an artist, he has looked steadily and with compassion on what Europe has become.

CLYDE BUILT. By John Shields. Glasgow. William Maclellan, Ltd. 12s. 6d. net.

This history of shipbuilding on the Clyde is the work of an author whose profound interest in his subject is enhanced by his practical knowledge and experience; for Mr. Shields writes not only as an official of the Clyde Navigation Trust, but also as a seafaring man in "Steam and Sail," and he has turned out a fine work which is to be recommended to all who are sentimentally or practically interested in big or little ships—from Bell's forty-ton *Comet* to the mammoth *Queen Elizabeth* and H.M.S. *Vanguard*, when, how and by whom they were designed and built. The romantic days of the clipper ships are recalled by the stories of the races between home and eastern ports by great rivals like *Cutty Sark* and *Thermopylae*, and *Lahloo*, which beat all of them by twice making China-London in ninety-eight days. Fastest of all the tea-clippers was the Greenock built *Ariel*, of which there is here a fine picture of her in full sail. This interesting book contains biographical notes and portraits of outstanding builders and designers of ships from the pioneer period to the present day, and there is a succinct history of the development of Clydebank. The whole is fully illustrated

with reproductions of engravings and photographs. The author is to be commended for his well-written, informative and entertaining work, but the publisher's novel idea of indexing—numerically under alphabetical headings—is not an improvement on the methods usually employed.

THE BUGBEAR OF LITERACY. By Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. Dobson. 7s. 6d.

The late Dr. Coomaraswamy was constantly occupied, as the present volume of brief essays shows, with the problems of western civilization, modern education, the relations between East and West, of anthropology and comparative religion.

It is unfortunate that his dislike of the West and devotion to the traditional East should make so many of his strictures seem here, those of a partisan. His arguments would have gained in impressiveness if he had not ignored in the East—while denouncing the very real horrors that accompany our civilization—child labour, the often shameful status of women, ritual cruelty, indifference to disease, the misery of the untouchables. He might, in addition to giving evidence of their inevitable demoralization, have explained why primitive peoples have so often been immediately responsive to the impact of a civilization that is culturally and spiritually at a much lower level than their own. Indeed, one may ask why a man who believed so profoundly in Him “from whose invariable beauty all contingent being depends” should be so ready to crack the world like a shell and throw the western half to the devil.

Dr. Coomaraswamy once wrote: “Our exaggerated valuation of ‘literature’ is as much a symptom of sentimentality as is our tendency to substitute ethics for religion”—a statement worth making, but the reader unfamiliar with his work may be bewildered at the sometimes unqualified attack on literacy by a man whose erudition was remarkable. The fact is that democracy was completely alien to his nature and that he favoured a learned élite, it alone sharpened by speculation, and for the people the blissful cud of ancestral faith and memories. Yet, having said this, it is proper to emphasize that these essays are salutary, and that, like all Dr. Coomaraswamy wrote, they reveal his eminence as a scholar equally acquainted with the metaphysics of East and West, his deep knowledge of Oriental and other arts. He had a distinction of mind and spirit that was rare and challenging.

PENNSYLVANIA SONGS AND LEGENDS: University of Pennsylvania Press. Edited by George Korson. Distributed in Ireland and the U.K. by Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 40/-

American interest in Folk-lore is a happy symptom, that a naivety displayed towards older cultures may, like adolescence, be passing. Of the sundry and odd volumes so far reaching us, Mr. Korson's book is the most important to date. He has marshalled twelve writers on sections of Pennsylvania tradition, whose essays add up to a symposium in print, as valuable as the contributions are uneven.

Undaunted by mythology's portents, in addition to the Introduction, Mr. Korson himself makes the thirteenth contribution, a revealing study on the tough balladry of the Pennsylvania coal-miners. Because the Irish strand in that skein is characteristically vivid, it is indeed wondrous to see what the American coalface plus the Johnny Mitchel sweat-glands can make of *An Cailín Deas Cruíde na m-Bo*. (P. 370).

Similar surprises await us (P. 250) to discover what the husky Conestoga Waggon-men did to that banner-song of the Irish Famine, *O, the Praties They are Small*. Processes and transmutations equally unknown to the amateurs in folksong (of whom, Ireland boasts an unusually large number) will crop up in J. Herbert Walker's chapter on Lumberjacks and Raftsmen; Harry Botsford's researches on Oilmen; Freeman H. Hubbard's informative piece on Railroaders—which spans, as nothing else can, the hiatus in living Irish folk-ways during the '30's continued as part of American history; and Lewis Edwin Theiss' writing on Canallers, quoting *The Cruise of the Bouncing Sally* (P. 283), which is, surely related somehow to *The Cruise of the Calabar* beloved of our own turf-bargees.

Just as colonisation exterminated the Cornplanter Indians, (a story, told by Merle H. Deardoff, in its end no different from Cromwell's in Ireland or Hitler's in Europe), so in its turn, steam put an end to horse-drawn loads. Hence the swansong "May the Devil get the fellow that invented the plan" in *The Waggoner's Curse on the Railroad*, a ballad which, in its poignancy, makes one think of what Dublin cabbies and outside-car jarvies feel towards the combustion-engine!

Still, the thesis that old folk-patterns never wholly die, but re-emerge in new permutations, is evidenced in the final, and to this reviewer the most exciting, chapter of the book, forward-looking and offsetting nostalgia. Here, in *Folksongs of the Industrial City*, Jacob A. Evanson shows us the national songs which Negro, Slovak, Greek, Swede, Irish, English, and many more, poured into the melting pot which was Pittsburg, city of steel. There, the proletariat brought forth a new element—an emergent both American and un-American in its nature, hinted to us during the War, in such librettos as *Ballad for Americans*, popularised by both Robeson and Crosby.

Parallel with new growths, the serious student of American tributaries will find a wealth of valuable research among the commentaries and song collections in the two opening chapters, namely *The British Folk Tradition*, and *Pennsylvania German Songs*, whilst J. William Frey's work on *Amish Hymns* (recalling occasionally the impact that the Palatines have had on Irish balladry and native poetry) is exceptional in its value.

That the *British Tradition* is allowed to contain the Anglo-Irish is a mistake in presentation, whether the editor or the author, Samuel Preston Bayard, are aware, or not, of the distinctive roots. Students in Ireland will appreciate *The Battle of the Boyne Water* (P. 47), and *The High Blanter Explosion*, with its unmistakable stamp of our 19th Century balladry, neither to be found in Irish collections, presumably because they are indigenous to American soil. *Old Jockey Song* (P. 39) has reached America from Scots-Lowland sources in exactly the same way that *They Say that the Wimmin Are Worse Than the Men* came to North-eastern Ireland.

Comparative analysis of this kind still waits to be done in the light of this volume's contents, and as its European corollary. The most painful field for researchers lies perhaps in examining the European tributaries which have run into the American mainstream; which, for example, came first *Der Jug hot en Loch*, (P. 83) or its English folk equivalent, *There's A Hole In The Bottle*, the German Lizz or the English Eliza? Which is the ancestor of *In Poland Schteht en Haus*

(P. 89) and *Willst du Wiezen* (P. 96), obvious by-products of adult singing games now surviving only in children's traditional play-forms?

The signposts point now to combined operations between representative teams from America and "the old countries," and perhaps the impetus will come from across the Atlantic, for towards that end there is little sign of stirrings on this side.

L. H. DAIKEN.

DOMINIQUE. By Eugène Fromentin. Translated by Sir Edward Marsh, K.C.V.O., C.B. The Cresset Press. 9s. 6d.

Eugène Fromentin, artist in the manner of Delacroix and distinguished writer, dedicated his single novel 'Dominique' to his friend, George Sand. The book excited the admiration of his contemporaries and has since been regarded in France as a minor classic.

There are faults in construction, and the fevered, intense atmosphere—unassuaged evidently for months together—will not be to everyone's taste; yet it is an exquisitely told story of a schoolboy's adoration of the beautiful Madeleine, little older than himself, who is soon married to a wealthy aristocrat. The boy, Dominique, goes to Paris and, maturing rapidly in taste and intelligence, is able to offer Madeleine a companionship that imperceptibly wins her heart. She remains faithful, however, to her cold-natured husband—though not without much agony to herself and to Dominique. The latter returns to his estate and, mastering the art of detachment, becomes a model landowner, husband and father.

with Turgenev's 'Rudin'; evidence of an exquisite ear: "The song of a wren instinct with silence, where sound met no obstacle"; and fine descriptive power.

There is a spaciousness, a relation of figures to landscape that has affinity seemed to go on for ever in the dumb empty lanes, steeped in moist air and At times the fidelity and freshness of observation recall the alert suffering gaze of Mr. de la Mare's Miss M.: "New-born insects were swarming everywhere, swinging in the wind like atoms of light at the tips of the tall grasses . . ." And with all this goes a restraint that makes some present-day novels flaunting and clumsy.

Sir Edward Marsh has made an impeccable translation for which those who appreciate fastidious prose will be grateful.

PEDAGOGUES ARE HUMAN. By R. L. Mégroz. Rockliff. 9s. 6d.

This is an excellent book offering quite a Pre-Peace value for money. It has many interests and different appeals. The reader of the literary anthology will delight in three hundred pages that range from Isaak Walton to Gerald Manley Hopkins, from the gentle wit of Lamb to the briskly efficient humour of Stephen Leacock. But this is not art for art's sake. Whether we are reading Roger Ascham on the scholarship of Elizabeth, or J. D. Beresford on the pedagogical genius of W. E. Ford we are reminded of those 'happiest days of our lives,' and we wonder . . .

We ponder the social implications. Wonder if a people can hope to be great when their teachers are underpaid and despised; wonder how long the

sensitive and imaginative boy must be tortured by the insensitive oaf (and, if this 'makes a man' of the sensitive, what does it make of his tormentor?) and, above all, this book is valuable because it makes us appreciate what miracles *can* be performed upon the young mind, and how immense might be the transformation of values, so that a generous and noble society may be ours, whenever we will it. The best is yet to come . . .

M. C.

THE FOX-HUNTER'S BEDSIDE BOOK. Compiled by The Lady Apsley, M.F.H. Illustrated by Lionel Edwards, R.I. Cr. 8vo. 584 + xxxv. London. Eyre & Spottiswoode. 12s. 6d. net.

At the conclusion of the hunting season, if Fate so willed that illness confined the hunting man or woman to bed, what a pleasant companion this book would be !

It is what one might call a "jolly" book: it exudes good humour, the open air, companionship: in fact all cheer associated with the day's hunting. In these times when efforts have been made to ban blood sports, it might well happen that those spoil-sports would be converted by the excellent choice of Lady Apsley. We found ourselves delving into the classics to confirm the quotations from Xenophon, Homer and Virgil: it has been well said that there is nothing new under the sun and certainly the sport of hunting seems to have been as popular in the days of the great classicists as it is to-day even though there are changes in the seat of the rider, the length of the leather and, especially, the dress of the ladies. We read with joy hair-raising descriptions of long hunts and short hunts. There is a delightful story by the fox—from his point of view and this is very reminiscent of that beautiful autobiography—The Story of the Pytchley Fox; our appetites are whetted on re-reading excerpts from Surtees "Soapy Sponges Sporting Tour," Masefield's "Reynard the Fox" and from many other well-known books and poems.

Whether Lionel Edwards is portraying the sorry figure of a fox chained up in a hen yard or whether we are looking with rapture at hounds in full cry, we are equally delighted. His illustrations enhance a delightful work which, as the compiler states in her introduction, is obviously a labour of love.

B. S.

LARGER ANIMALS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE. By Eileen Mayo. Pleiades Books Ltd. 6s.

BADOLI THE OX. By Myles Bourke. Howard B. Timmins, Cape Town, and George Allen & Unwin. 42s.

Miss Mayo's account of the larger wild animals of Great Britain is a most attractive little work. The appearance, food and habits of each animal are described vividly and with the right amount of detail. Children will be enchanted to learn about fox cubs "soft and grey-gold like the willow catkins above their nursery"; of otter cubs patiently taught to swim, their mother "taking each one on her back, where it clings to her, full of fear"; of the badger's beautifully tidy home and spring cleaning; of how "sheep and cattle turn aside from an angry doe hare"; and about the differences between Red deer, Fallow deer and Roe

deer. The book ends with an excellent table for children seriously interested in nature-study. The illustrations are admirably suited to the text.

The legends which are recounted in *Badoli The Ox* belong to the different Bantu tribes. They come from a collection made by the author over many years. The familiar and cherished pattern of beauty in distress, courageous or disobedient youth, wicked relatives, the search for magic, loyal and clever animals against a background of jungle, drought, violent storms, lakes and fertile valleys will give pleasure to adult as well as young readers. But as the book is an expensive production, it would have been worth while boldly to give more literal renderings of the indigenous forms of these stories rather than to pander to European taste; and as the Bantu tribes have great artistic talent, illustrations by native artists would have considerably enhanced interest and quality. Even in its present form, however, the book is a fascinating one.

WILD FLOWERS AT A GLANCE. By M. C. Carey and Dorothy Fitchew. Dent. 10/6. With more than 260 illustrations of wild flowers in full colour.

In her short and modest preface to this invaluable little book, the author tells us of another work "Conversations on Botany," a book which is now sought for by collectors of colour-plate books, in which "Edward, a small boy, holds eighteen instructive conversations with his mother, and in which she methodically answers his questions, and incidentally gives him first" a list of twenty-four botanical classes to learn (from Monandria to Cryptogamia, and, after that a list of Orders (Monogynia to Siliquosa). "Now," the author adds, "*Wild Flowers at a Glance* is not at all the kind of book that Mama would have chosen for Edward," but what a gift it would have been for those Edwards of a later date who had to come so painfully at their knowledge of Botany through the ponderous tomes of Mackay's *Flora Hibernica* or the *Cybele Hibernica* of Moore and More, or even the Bentham & Hooker with its companion volume of Illustrations—alas, uncoloured! The Edward of 1817, as we are told "goes for his first walk in the fields, and finds a Germander Speedwell," but he does not discover the name of this "nice little blue flower" until Mama has lectured on it for some time, and decided that it is in the class *Diandria* and of the order *Monogynia*. Let us suppose that the Edward of the present time (and the fortunate possessor of *Wild Flowers at a Glance*) also goes a botanising and brings back a specimen of the same "nice little blue flower." Even without the help of Mama he will at once be able to find the flower in the excellent index and turning to page 182, he will find an unmistakeable illustration of his find, and moreover, learn that it is found in woods and fields, banks, roadsides, all over Britain, that it flowers spring and summer, that "the flowers spring from the leaf axils. They are a bright blue, and grow in spikes on stalks longer than the leaves. The four petals open from a little tube and are about $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch across. They are much paler on the undersides. The leaves are stalkless, oval, hairy, coarsely toothed, and grow in pairs. The stem lies on the ground at first, creeping and rooting, and then rises upright: it is hairy between each pair of leaves, and on two opposite sides down the stem." He will also learn that the little flower, in common with the other speedwells is named *Veronica*, after the saint, that its second name is *Chamaedrys*: the Latin form of the Greek name of the plant, and that its height

is "about 1 foot"—a fact which he can easily verify by means of the measuring rule which the thoughtful compilers have printed on the back cover "for convenience in field use."

The little book in every way fulfills the promise of its title, for "the main grouping is non-botanical" the flowers being arranged in (normal) colour sections, the brief notes if "elementary" are quite adequate and there is added a useful list of "botanical words used."

PETS BEFORE MY CAMERA. By Adolf Morath, London. George Newnes, Ltd.
30/-

During the past few weeks the reviewer had the good fortune to visit the Gallery of sporting paintings in London. There he saw the work of all the famous masters of the past: Stubbs, Wheelright, Herring and many others were represented, but the pleasure in visiting that gallery was no greater than the pleasure evoked by the work under review. Morath is a great photographer and by "great" we mean that he is able not only to obtain likenesses, but to get inside the soul of his sitter: he obviously loves animals for he claims their sympathy and they, very evidently, enjoy doing what he wishes.

Animal lovers must possess this book: those who wish to improve their prowess in the art of photography will derive enormous benefit, for with each illustration are given various technical details such as the type of camera used, lighting arrangements and other technical arrangements so necessary to the amateur photographer. Certainly his desire to arouse a greater interest in the subject of pet photography will be realised.

The script is nearly as interesting as the pictures. Do dogs like children? Are dogs conscious of their own good looks? These are some of the interesting problems discussed. And what a variety of animals is portrayed. Mr. Morath obviously loves cats, especially those of the Siamese breed. His mares and foals are alive. The farmyard scenes bring us to the countryside: we can nearly smell the food the sow is eating. The mongrel dog is as handsome as the thoroughbred and maternity is shown in all its beauty in a group photograph of a springer spaniel with her eight puppies. Geese, swans and bulldogs are among the sitters. Sad animals, gay animals all appear, some of them accompanied by children.

One of the most interesting studies is that of an African monkey, who was difficult to manage; the end result is a picture of an animal with her hands around a pole, gaze full of interest: this is a veritable triumph.

Many other technical problems such as colour photography are discussed.

"*Pets Before My Camera*" will be a welcome present to people of all ages: it is a truly valuable production, not only for immediate reading but to have at one's bedside and to peruse over and over again.

B. S.

RIDING. By Eric Harrison. With illustrations by John Board. Cr. 8vo. Pp. 158. 1949. John Lehmann, Ltd., London.

This is certainly amazing value for 7/6. The tyro will learn all about hunting, points of the horse and even how to purchase one. He will find here a book written in good English with many descriptive figures, including a double page illustrating the anatomy of a horse. There are many apposite sayings, e.g. "The affinity between rider and mount is close and intimate": surely all

will agree that this is a most important factor in the enjoyment of riding and hunting and one which many seem to forget. There are far too many horsemen who seem to think that theirs is the only enjoyment and that the horse does not share as well. "It may be that the person is never too young or too old to ride so long as he sets about it in the right way." The reviewer would add to this, that so long as one is sound in health there is never any necessity to give up riding.

The work is enjoyable and instructive; it is an excellent textbook for the student or even the teachers of equitation.

In conclusion, the following quotation must be given:—"... if the riding of a horse in itself is an intense pleasure and a great art, the opportunities for enjoyment, exercise, and skill, to which riding can lead, are both numerous and varied. Whether you wish to cross a wind-swept moor, or to explore a narrow twisting lane, is there a better way of progress than on horseback?"

B. S.

TRAVELS THROUGH FRANCE AND ITALY. By Tobias Smollett. With an Introduction by Osbert Sitwell. The Chiltern Library. John Lehmann. 8s. 6d.

To read Smollett's *Travels Through France and Italy* without Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* in mind would be difficult. In the one, Virtue sets out with family and forthrightness to view Europe; in the other, Gaiety—or as Sterne praises it in *La Fleur*, festivity of temper—whose chief rebuke, and that a gentle one, is to the naughtiness of his reader's imagination.

Smollett's *Travels* have been called insipid and himself uncouth, but that is to malign him and his book. If he lacks Sterne's engaging style and wit, his impassioned interest in the swirl of life as it passed before his enchanted gaze, yet the Doctor was as shrewd as he was blunt, and if acid both in observation and in temper, his reforming zeal was genuine. Indeed, much of his touchiness was on the surface. He did not disguise his "violent fits of passion, chequered, however, with transports of a more agreeable nature; insomuch that I may say I was for two months continually agitated either in mind or body, and very often in both at the same time," nor his defeats and loss of dignity; and he owns quite freely to the limitations of his comments on art.

In his pugnacious, vivid and substantial way he could with Sterne snatch at the adventures that hang on every bush. And if one's affection goes out more readily to the Sterne who wrote:

"I walked up gravely to the window in my dusty black coat, and, looking through the glass, saw all the world in yellow, blue, and green, running at the ring of pleasure . . ."

yet Smollett can secure attention by his harsh revelations, his dour scrapings of the surface:

"But I know no custom more beastly than that of using water-glasses, in which polite company spirt, and squirt, and spue the filthy scourgings of their gums, under the eyes of each other. I knew a lover cured of his passion, by seeing this nasty cascade discharged from the mouth of his mistress";

and also by his sudden pleasures, his zest. It would have been sad if Sterne had had his way with Smollett's book.

The present edition has an admirable and appreciative introduction by Sir Osbert Sitwell.

If it has evolved satisfactorily, on the whole, from the early emphasis Evans; a delightful account by H. O. Stutchbury of the opinions of such English and night and ceaselessly, there is given to the public a propaganda that does if the scientist's civic virtue was as high as that of the artist?

THE PICK OF TODAY'S SHORT STORIES. Selected by John Pudney with Introduction and Notes. Odhams Press. 8s. 6d.

Mr. John Pudney claims that he lacks the courage to define the short story; but he possesses a happy discernment of its merits, and his selection is on the whole admirable and lively.

Faced with so much, a brief review must be summary. The story by Elizabeth Bowen is dexterous and thin, Frank O'Connor's has a sly humour that is in interesting contrast to the bland mischief of V. S. Pritchett. Those by H. E. Bates, P. H. Newby and William Plomer are excellent studies in atmosphere, and there is a droll ease in A. E. Coppard's "Stupid, Stupid!" that is enchanting. Graham Greene shows himself as adept at pseudo-guileless propaganda as G. K. Chesterton. One is curious, as with the Father Brown stories, to know what sort of reader the author calculates will swallow the benevolent and unenticing hook. Evelyn Waugh's "Tactical Exercise" is a very neat version of what might be called the *tu quoque* plot.

The book concludes with notes by Mr. Pudney on the twenty-four contributors. There is an odd touch: the reminder that one of them had for grandfather an agricultural labourer; that another was the son of a tailor and a housemaid. Is it suggested that these occupations are more significant than the unnamed activities of other parents?

TALES OF GOOD AND EVIL. By Nicolai V. Gogol. Translated with an Introduction by David Magarshack. The Chiltern Library. John Lehmann. 8/6.

Most critics of Russian literature have emphasized Gogol's influence on writers like Turgenev, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky; and have agreed that every Russian novelist after him had to give his version of *The Overcoat*—included in this collection. Gogol is generally regarded either as the ultra-romantic but great artist capable of bouts of realism during which he exposed social evils and created with enormous humour and psychological acumen a remarkable collection of characters; or—to quote Mirsky—a creative genius of inadequate understanding whose "characters were not realistic caricatures of the world without, but introspective caricatures of the fauna of his own mind," and himself "a psychological phenomenon of exceptional curiosity." Mr. Magarshack, in his valuable introduction, evidently inclines more to the former point of view, though stressing the significance Gogol accorded to dreams.

One interesting aspect of the fantastic in Gogol is that by his intersection of the objective and subjective he could reach the impressionism of such a passage as "The pavement, he felt, was moving at a terrific speed under him; the carriages with their galloping horses stood still; the bridge stretched and was about to break in the centre of its arch; the houses were upside down; a sentry-box came reeling towards him; and the halberd of the constable, together with the gilt letters of some signboard and the scissors painted upon it, flashed across his very eyelash." Like Poe, too, he often goaded his imagination towards hysteria.

The selection made by Mr. Magarshack exhibits Gogol's genius in all its range.

HALF IN EARNEST. By John D. SHERIDAN. Dublin. Talbot Press. 6s. net.
THE SPICE OF LIFE. By Donal O'Sullivan. Dublin. Browne & Nolan.
10s. 6d. net.

Among the Dublin new issues are these collections of essays in the lighter vein that affords happy relief from the vast amount of more sophisticated, and often dull, volumes which are filling the booksellers' shelves. These under review are the work of accomplished essayists who can stay, as it were, the present-day speed and whirl of life to entertain us with the simplicities—but not the trivialities. Both are to be recommended for reading at "odd moments," although this reviewer finished each of them in two sittings.

Half in Earnest is a welcome addition to the earlier collections of essays by which John Sheridan established himself as a writer about the everyday affairs and excursions of the Common Man. It seems as if everywhere and in everybody there is material for his whimsical philosophy and originality of thought. In a pleasing style of expression he makes it joyful for us to read all that he has to say about pubs and 'planes and casual places. There is nothing cheap or crude in this author's good humour, and the half that is in earnest is, one may assume, the wisdom which runs through each of his literary cameos. There is a homely air about most of this book, although at times we are taken far afield. One of the best contributions is "On Going to America," which is an example of concise description.

Another collection of "things pleasant" is Donal O'Sullivan's *The Spice of Life*, twenty-two essays which originally appeared in the *Times Pictorial*. The spice of life is, to the author, good conversation—"most urbane of the arts"—and, while deploring its decline, he recalls some of the cultured talkers in the literary circles of an older generation of Dubliners. Mr. O'Sullivan himself is a practised and thoughtful conversationalist, and he writes as one, in a style that is free and friendly, on a diversity of subjects. Mainly the book has an out-of-doors atmosphere—holidays, gardens, a travelling circus, a realistic account of the great fistic battle which was fought at Donnelly's Hollow, and a canal-boat trip across half of England; and equally entertaining are the chapters on the Old Music Hall, the "Pictures," Epitaphs and Famous Last Words. It may be true, as the author suggests, that good talkers are not as a rule good writers; but there are exceptions to that rule—here is one!

J. R. H.

STRANGERS AT THE FAIR. By Patricia Lynch. Puffin Story Book Series. 1s. 6d. net.

JOHNNY AND JEMIMA. By Bryan Guinness. Windmill Press. 6s. net.

An addition to the Puffin Story Book Series is the reprint of Patricia Lynch's *Strangers at the Fair*, which is as delightful a book as any child could wish to read, or have read to it. These little Irish tales are told with all the simplicity and wide-eyed sincerity of a child, yet nothing of the short story technique is lacking in their execution. Patricia Lynch writes admirably of dreams—but never allows herself to do so.

Most of her little characters; Eileen and Seamus, the woodcutter's children, Yalla Handkerchief, the king of the gypsies, and Fergus and the Ballad Singer, are old friends from her previous books.

One of the most delightful features of this little book is the ability with which she paints a picture—such as a fair, the Cave of the Good People, or the Tavern on the Rathshee—and breathes into it an atmosphere of Irish life and Folklore. It is this atmosphere that is her great achievement, and few Irish kiddies could fail to be enchanted by it.

There is no time to stand and stare in the story of *Johnny and Jemima* by Bryan Guinness. The children are left behind by their fathers. Johnny's father has gone to India to be a colonel, and leaves him so that he won't be burnt to a frazzle in the heat. Jemima's father has gone to China to be an ambassador, and leaves her so that she won't be frozen to an icicle in the cold. They are left with cruel guardians, and decide to run away into the forest. In the forest they are joined by Joseph and James, one of who was dark and the other fair "but both were equally dirty." Several others join them for obvious and not so obvious reasons, and after many pleasant and not so pleasant adventures, they find a treasure hoard. This solves the housing and food problems.

In the few moments when we are not reading of the adventures of the children, we are treated to brief descriptions of the forest; of the trees, streams and clearings, with which the writer is at his ease, and which present few problems to him.

This little story speaks for itself. As a story it has passed down by word of mouth in the writer's family, and he modestly presents it for the enjoyment of other children. He need not fear that the story has suffered in his telling it.

A few words must be said about the very faithful illustrations to this book by Roland Pym. The artist has entered adequately into the spirit of it, and with a few light strokes of his pencil has succeeded in doing what the writer has done with a few strokes of his pencil; namely, they have succeeded in presenting a children's story in the best possible and most charming manner.

E. K.

DELAY IN THE SUN. By Anthony Thorne. John Lehmann. 6s. net.

Anthony Thorne's novel *Delay in the Sun*—first published in 1936—is a deeply interesting study of the effect of a break made in the routine of the lives of nine people. The scene is set in Querinda, a tiny Spanish village. Querinda he describes as "the perfection of futility; the sort of futility which, though it is the outcome of genius, cannot be attained without painstaking attention to

detail." In this little village, scorched by the intolerable heat of the sun and smelling of the eternal vegetables, a bus strike delays the English travellers on their journey to Corunna.

Mr. Thorne's vivid picture of Spanish life as a background to his novel is edifying. He neither condemns nor praises it; he merely describes it. It needs no embellishment. He describes in a masterly fashion the afternoon siesta during which the benches, walls, and pavements are littered with men "who seem to have fallen asleep wherever they happen to be, whatever they happen to be doing, as though a spell has suddenly been cast upon them." He describes their enthusiastic night-life in their taverns, "where they find good wine and song, and where there are always four guitars hanging, for anybody to play who will." We are made to feel the sun beating down upon us. It is a world of colour, brutal primitive colour, which is echoed in the natures of the people themselves, and which cannot fail to affect the lives of the travellers who are stranded there.

The hurried lives of the travellers are jerked suddenly to a standstill. Like the tramp, they are made to "stand and stare." The reaction of the travellers to this primitive, unornamental world is the re-examination of accepted values. A father and son relationship, the relationship of friends and lovers, of a secretary for her employer; all are re-examined in this new light, the light of the sun which fosters life, or destroys it when the equilibrium of nature is lost.

Mr. Thorne has left few aspects of human relationships untouched, and offers a banquet of food for thought. A vivid and colourful style, coupled with a deep understanding and sympathy with human nature, makes this an outstanding book which few people will fail to enjoy.

E. K.

THE WORLD IS A WEDDING. By Delmore Schwartz. John Lehmann. 9s. 6d. net.

The World is a Wedding, a book of American short stories, justifiably recommended by the Book Society, is a considerable achievement for the author—a distinguished contemporary American poet—in the use of the short story as a literary medium. In common with all writers of importance, Mr. Schwartz deals with matters fundamental to human life; namely with human relationships and values.

His background is America between the two world wars. The effect of the depression and prosperity on individual life has been the simple categorisation of man as either a success or a failure. These two categories are quite independent of moral or personal qualities. Thus, when a character in the title story points out that nine million dollars would be of no use to supplant what is lacking in his nature, he is not understood. The husband in the story "The Child is the Meaning of Life," may desert his family and lead an immoral life without in any way destroying the admiration other people have for him as a successful man.

The author himself is searching for other values. He recognises that nature has placed limitations on human beings, and accepts this fact. "I am not a failure," says one of his characters, "I am not a failure because I never wanted to be a success. I have no desire for the only kinds of success that are available." Then he goes on to say, "Now if the idea of love supplanted the ideas of success and failure, how joyous everyone might be! and how different the quality of life."

In the fantasy entitled "The Statues" Mr. Schwartz poetically describes an event which makes human beings suddenly aware of the superficiality of their lives. A phenomenon caused by a strange fall of snow which takes on human forms, cause people to turn away momentarily from their avid money making to contemplate these beautiful forms. As a result they become more gentle and beautiful themselves. It is a piece of delightful wishful thinking, which the realist in him knows to be untrue and regrets.

John Lehmann is to be thanked for publishing this American work for English readers. His policy is to build up a list of distinguished literary works of all young writers of promise from many parts of the world, and *The World is a Wedding* is an admirable beginning to such a laudable enterprise.

E. K.

ENCOUNTERS. By Elizabeth Bowen. Sidgwick & Jackson. 7s. 6d. net.

These early writings of Miss Elizabeth Bowen are of interest, not only as short stories in themselves, but as a glimpse of a maturing artist. In her preface to this new edition, Miss Bowen remarks that at 22, one is more interested in oneself than in other people, and her work shows indeed, a delight in her growing powers of expression. But despite what she herself describes as "the synthetic language used to express real feelings," there is seldom any obscurity in meaning or absence of feeling in the stories.

"The Daffodils," "All Saints," "Mrs. Windermere" and "The Shadowy Third"—to take four of the outstanding stories—have the same theme of the shattering effect of reality on the idealist. In all of them is the unwillingness to accept the fact as it is, for at 22 the authoress is still "weak enough to hate criminals and fools." Mrs. Windermere, the self-styled "Helper," who insists on "helping" young unhappy wives to their ruin, needs considerable ironic handling for full effect. This the young Miss Bowen has tried to do, and with some success, but Mrs. Windermere is really little more than the first rough sketch for some later larger scale work.

The plots of the stories are slight, sometimes conjured up to give vent to a feeling, as for example "Requiescat," written, she points out, "to ease an obsession about Lake Como and a particular garden I knew above it." The stories are however, the work of a person with a keen and sensitive mind, a mind repelled and attracted at the same time by the outside world. If at times intolerant, it is keenly aware of its opponent. There is too, something new in the approach. Each person has more or less the same daily experiences or feelings, and yet these experiences appear as new. This is how Miss Bowen's work strikes me; as a collection of sketches and stories enthused with a spirit of individuality, always fresh and exhilarating to the reader.

E. K.

MARY OLIVER—A LIFE. By May Sinclair. John Lehmann. 8s. 6d. net.

The late May Sinclair's novel *Mary Oliver—A Life* (first published 1919), succeeds in doing what the title implies, namely in depicting a life, a human life, against a background in which the full meaning of life has almost ceased to exist.

Its period is the late-Victorian era, an age caught up in the coils of a bloodless puritan tradition, a tradition of despair for the beauty that is in life. It is a world of frustration, of people who, in following these ideals, have lost a part of themselves; a world of Aunt Charlottes who shriek out to be loved and to love; of Uncle Victors who fear to marry and bring idiot children into the world; of sons who go into the army in order to live—and die, or who go to the colonies to escape. In such a world illusion takes the place of reality. No one really understands it. "The room was full of wool," says Mary, "wool flying about, hanging in the air and choking you. Clogging your mind . . . wool, spun out, wound round you, woven in a net. They caught you in it when you were a baby a month old. You would have to cut and tug and kick and fight your way out. They were caught in it themselves, they couldn't get out, they didn't want to get out. The wool stopped their minds working: They hated it when their minds worked, when anybody's mind worked." It was a generation brought up to despise and distrust its feelings, and was thus unable to love neither God nor man.

Mary will rebel. She sees beauty in everything—in the self. But there is Mamma to be dealt with, and one mustn't make Mamma cry. "I feel there's something about Mamma that would kill me if I let it," she says. "I've had to fight for every single thing I've wanted. It's awful fighting her, when she's so sweet and gentle. But it's either that or go under." Her mother too, is incapable of the love that creates.

Mary's subjectivism comes as a logical reaction against her age. She is still, nevertheless, a part of it, and attempts to use its weapons—its intellectualism—to discover the real nature of truth. But her very intellectualism defeats her. Thought only helps to discover the enemy she is fighting against, but it cannot help her to discover truth. Only feeling can do that. It is because of Mary's deep sensitivity that she survives. When this realisation comes she can free herself from her background, and can begin to live.

May Sinclair writes a concentrated impressionistic style. In her short sharp sentences more is suggested than said. The result is a continuous flow of ideas. This is aided by the repetition of phrases, sentences and words, which link the past and the present, and contain a prophecy for the future. This style suits admirably the theme. There is a constant throb of activity and movement, of the birth of a thought, its development and maturity. And so it is with life. It is for this reason that I say May Sinclair is justified in calling her book "A Life," and why the book has lost nothing of its appeal in the 30 years since its first publication, and why it will continue to have an appeal in the future as a significant work of art.

E. K.

FIDDLERS' GREEN By Patrick Purcell. Dublin. The Talbot Press: 8s. 6d. net.

THE MAGNIFICENT MAC DARNEY. By John D. Sheridan. Dublin: The Talbot Press. 8s. 6d. net.

HENRY JANE OF FARREHAVEN. By Richard Phibbs. A. Wingate. 8s. 6d.

A distinctive novel, in which the principal characters are brought together in places so diverse as Dublin and Mayo, Manhattan and Switzerland and Paris, is *Fiddlers' Green*, Mr. Purcell's continuation of the story of Mark O'Dea, who was introduced to us in *The Quiet Man*. Having decided that neither pulpit

nor plow can satisfy his ambitions, Mark becomes a newspaperman in Dublin, goes to New York, where, after bluffing his way into the presence of a tough owner-editor, he is appointed a Special Correspondent in Europe, just when the Germans are about to overrun France. His contacts and adventures are many and varied; but in all that are vital or incidental to his progress he is sustained by his optimism and good luck, so that he escapes from beleaguered Paris with the same resourcefulness that brought about his introduction to a very exclusive publishing house in America. O'Dea's story—it is told by himself—is one of sustained entertainment. The places he goes to and the people he meets are shown to us recreatively and with understanding. Moreover, Mr. Purcell's realistic depictions and characterizations are woven into an unbroken web of Irish interest.

The publisher's suggestion notwithstanding, Mac Darney—*The Magnificent Mac Darney*—does not follow in "the great tradition of Falstaff and Micawber." He is of lesser clay; but, had he been gifted with a modicum of wit or humour, he might have become a Dublin "character." As Mr. Sheridan presents him, he is a boasting sponger or "toucher." The author, however, gives us a meritable exposition of Mac Darney's false-pride and inflated self-importance, and in the surroundings and background of the man he finds the sub-themes which are the essentials of this likeable, true-to-life story of things said and done in town and tenement, of wifely devotion and daughterly toleration; and of the "film-set," with Mac Darney—not at all magnificent—as a great "stand in."

There is stronger meat in *Henry Jane of Farrenhaven*, an intimate story that begins with Henry, an Anglo-Irish boy, at school in England. He comes home to Ireland, for the funeral of his murdered grandfather, and after the burning of Farrenhaven House he and the Jane family sojourn in Italy, where his father has an *affaire* with Sylvia Luck, before settling down in Devonshire. Later on, Henry and Sylvia are brought together at Cambridge and London and Melbury Bubb. A sequence of events and delicate situations moves rapidly, and the consociations of Owen Monroe, Carrony and Mrs. Rawle, Phoebe Grierson, Bancroft Boake, Henry and Sylvia, seem to be leading towards not a "triangle," but something like a "pentangle," until the ending. Carrony's death is *post-partum*; Sylvia, disappointed in her wish to adopt Henry's and Carrony's child, sinks herself in a sisterhood; Henry becomes a soldier, and is killed in battle. Mr. Phipps does not overburden his work with physical description or psychological examination. His scenic backgrounds are drawn with the lighter touch, and his characters are allowed to reveal themselves by their speech and actions. Frankness is softened by the author's apt turn of phrase, by innuendo and suspense.

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE. By Tennessee Williams. John Lehmann. 7/6.

This is a fine play. The author has power, and can create atmosphere and a sense of pathetic, impending tragedy. His dialogue is cunningly blended, so that the guttersnipe paucity of language, characteristic of this unhappy epoch, is at times joyously illuminated by verbal felicities and beauties. An instinctive sense of the Theatre furnishes opportunities for the producer, who should be (happily) on the same imaginative level as the dramatist. Mr. Tennessee Williams will one day write a great play, if Hollywood doesn't get him!

M. C.

URANIUM 235. A Documentary Play in Eleven Episodes. By Ewan MacColl. William MacLellan.

The Theatre mirrors the age, and in an unhappy epoch, there is produced—or at least written—the play of ideas. Joy is not enough, in play or in Life: the thoughtful puritan must be led through the sinful portals and past the box-office.

Uranium 235 is a fine play in its own poetic right, but the passionate sincerity of Mr. Ewan MacColl's social ideas call for equally sincere treatment, so far as space allows. Briefly then: it cannot be too often insisted that for our present anarchy and domination of organised crime we are *all* to blame. Yet some are less blameworthy than others. It should never be forgotten that, day and night and ceaselessly, there is given to the public a propaganda that does much to account for apathy.

In this play the Protagonist is the scientist throughout the ages, the enlightened discoverer, playing Cassandra to a brutal mob, and suffering accordingly. But is this picture quite true of the modern scientific specialist? He is, to E. M. Forster, "the subservient pimp of industry." Is it quite sufficient for modern Science to say to us: we are not responsible for the use to which you so perversely put our gifts? Could we live in a world of quantitative values, and of shoddy, if the scientist's civic virtue was as high as that of the artist?

Surely the charge of *trahison des clercs* is one to which scientists rather than artists are susceptible. There has, for example, been continual warfare between artist and 'economist.' Could not a responsible body of scientists declare (as individual scientists have done) that there can never be such a thing as economic laws, or an economic science? Suppose a similar group of men made claims to practice medical science, would scientists be slow to answer such claims?

Mr. Ewan MacColl is a poet and a fighter. His thoughts are worthy of careful consideration. Obviously *Uranium* 235 will be effective in the theatre, and one would prefer to see and to *feel* its dramatic values rather than analyse its thought-content.

M. C.

ADAM. International Review. Edited by Miron Grindea. Nos. 195 and 196. June and July, 1949. 1/6 each.

The June number of *Adam* is concerned wholly with Balzac. There are tributes by Paul Claudel, Jules Romains and Georges Duhamel; an authoritative article by William Hobart Royce on the best order of reading in part, or in its entirety, the *Comédie Humaine*, and one on Balzacian scholarship by Henri Evans; a delightful account by H. O. Stutchbury on the opinions of such English writers as George Eliot, Thackeray, Swinburne, Matthew Arnold, Oscar Wilde and Henry James; and a letter from the young Balzac to his sister about his first work, *Cromwell*.

The July number provides a really admirable conspectus of contemporary Dutch poets and writers; and includes a note on the painter, Hendrik Chabot, with a reproduction of his oil painting, *The Flight* (1943), and articles on the trends of the country's literature, drama and music. The translations are in French and English.

The policy of devoting each issue of *Adam* to a definite subject or writer makes the review an international guide and commentary of notable interest.

SOUTHERLY. Quarterly: Price 2/- (postage extra.) No. Three of 1944.

The quarterly publication of the Australian English Association, Sydney, is an excellent guide to present-day writing. A major part of the magazine is devoted to reviews and critical essays designed not only to relate each writer to the contemporary scene in Australian literature, but also to relate him to Europe and America.

The short stories and the verse have, in the number reviewed, the merits of direct approach and an agreeable simplicity of treatment.

AMERICAN SILVER. By John Marshall Phillips. Max Parrish & Co., Ltd.

AMERICAN QUILTS AND COVERLETS. By Florence Peto.

15s. each.

These books are the first in a series entitled *American Crafts* "which will describe the growth and development of the many crafts to which America has given a new expression and a new approach."

Mrs. Peto has written a very delightful account of the quilt-making era in America; and the plates in colour and in monochrome are of rare examples dating from 1748 onwards. It is impossible not to be infected by the enthusiasm which describes one heirloom with a Rising Sun design in terms like these: "Colors rival those in a Persian rug: dark greens, plum, crimson and wine reds, rose-beige, light and dark blues and gold." Full instructions are given for the amateur who may be tempted by the various techniques. Mrs. Peto's own drawings of lovely quilting patterns further adorn the text.

Professor Phillips traces the art of the silversmith from the seventeenth century, and indicates how such influences as the Baroque of the William and Mary style, Quen Anne, Rococo and later styles were modified by American individuality. He illustrates from historical documents his argument that: "Inasmuch as silver is such a personal thing and its production part and parcel of the life of the people, reflecting as it does the racial background, social, economic and political conditions of its day, one cannot disassociate it from its maker or its original owner." *American Silver* is at once a scholarly book of reference and a fascinating social study, with fine reproductions of various period pieces in silver and gold.

BYRON, HOBHOUSE, AND FOSCOLO. By E. R. Vincent. Cambridge University Press. 10s. 6d.

Professor Vincent has made very skilful use of hitherto unpublished documents to reveal a 'little-known episode of literary history.' Briefly, John Cam Hobhouse, having agreed to annotate the Fourth Canto of *Childe Harold*, sought the help of the Italian poet and exile, Ugo Foscolo. Foscolo had been made welcome by a select circle in London; and Hobhouse, anxious that his exposition should be worthy of Byron's poem, asked Foscolo to provide him with the material necessary to make his consideration of Italian literature authoritative. The latter, partly from cordiality and perhaps from reluctance, as the more important man of letters, to acknowledge work not wholly his own, stipulated that his name be withheld. Hobhouse, whose intention was to use the material in his own fashion, agreed. When, however, it was Foscolo's contribution to the *Illustrations* that received the highest praise, Hobhouse was embarrassed as well as irritated. In Italian literary circles various omissions and the opinions

expressed were criticized; but generally it was suspected that so deep a knowledge of Italian literature and the acute criticism must be Foscolo's. He denied the collaboration with such vehemence that later, despite Hobhouse's desire to publish Foscolo's name, both realised that a revelation of the truth would place them in an unenviable position.

Meanwhile Hobhouse suggested further collaboration on an additional appendix to the poem—a survey of recent events in Italy—and offered payment. Foscolo's always precarious finances made him welcome the offer. Unfortunately, it took Hobhouse a long time to understand that the poet's frenzied and repeated appeals for advance payments indicated no mere temporary difficulties, but desperate need. He was a just and kindly man and in the letters obviously prided himself, despite exasperation, on his firmness, fairness and civility to an excitable poet exaggerating casual words and unimportant circumstances to absurd proportions. The friendship declined after 1819, was renewed for a time, and then abruptly ended when Foscolo, romantic and ardent if—as Hobhouse angrily asserted—of a 'diabolical ugliness,' proposed marriage to the latter's young and beautiful sister. By 1824, Foscolo, after a short prosperity, had to give up the struggle to live as a social figure. He worked for a time as a literary hack under an assumed name; and died, neglected and in poverty, in 1827.

Much of the correspondence between Hobhouse and Foscolo was carried on in laboured French. Professor Vincent was right to preserve Foscolo's inaccuracies: they seem to underline his often pathetic efforts to protect his rights, to explain his miseries with dignity, to be understood by the man he had been ready to make his friend. Byron never met him, though his malicious delight at the literary feuds in Italy over the *Essay on Italian Literature* is obvious in his letters to Hobhouse. The latter wrote to him on more than one occasion his opinion of Foscolo. Thus, in a letter dated February 23rd 1824, he declared:

"You will find him, if you become acquainted, a very extraordinary person, not over agreeable, but full of colloquy of the highest kind. I never heard him make a commonplace remark in my life. He has made many enemies and few friends here, being a true poet in that particular, and rather impracticable."

To read the documents now published is to realize that Hobhouse, if his friendship for Foscolo was lukewarmly affectionate, had, quarrels notwithstanding, a decided, but limited, appreciation of the poet's remarkable personality and gifts.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

By M. J. MacManus

THE ANATOMY OF BIBLIOMANIA. By Holbrook Jackson. (Faber, 31/6.)
BOOK-COLLECTING: MORE LETTERS TO EVERYMAN. By Percy H. Muir. (Cassell, 7/6.)

Mr. Holbrook Jackson is the complete bookman: nothing in the whole range of the world's literature seems alien to him. He has explored the most hidden places and generally with the happiest results. In this book, which every

bibliophile will welcome back into print, he shares his immense knowledge with his readers and makes it almost impossible for them not to share some of his enthusiasm. He has provided an appetising dish for the book-collector and a gargantuan feast for the bibliophile.

There are 650 pages in this volume: he would be a Philistine and a churl who would say that there is one too many. For it is compound of many delights, a well-spring where one can drink deeply and rewardingly. Chapter follows chapter in a glittering cavalcade—"The Pleasure of Books"; "The Art of Reading"; "A Pageant of Bookmen"; "Borrowers, Biblioklepts and Bestowers"; "Of Bibliomania or Book-Madness"; "The Five Ports of Book-love"; "Bibliophily Triumphant"—the very titles stir the imagination and hint at the richness to follow.

Mr. Jackson has a large and illustrious company at his elbow to point his exposition and defence of bibliophily with sayings that are witty, learned, eloquent, or persuasive. The poets and the playwrights, the dons and the divines, the philosophers and the theologians, the wits and the humorists—they are all here, ready to step forward at a moment's notice with an illuminating phrase or an appropriate commentary. Does Mr. Jackson talk about fine bindings? Old Dan Chaucer is beside him almost before he can begin, with his own description of a comely volume:—

*Full goodly-bounde in pleasaunt coverture
Of damas, satyr, or els of velvet pure*

Does he talk about bookshops? Samuel Pepys speaks up: "To my book seller's, and there bought Hooker's 'Polity,' the new edition, and Dugdale's 'History of the Inns of Court,' of which there was but few saved out of the Fire of London, and Playford's new 'Catch-book,' that hath a great many fooleries in it." Does he talk about the craze for modern first editions? Andrew Lang has a comment to make:—

*Fair first editions, duly prized,
Above them all methinks I rate
The tome where Walton's hand revised
His wonderful receipts for bait.*

This is one of the unreviewable books, because, every section being a book in itself, it offers an embarrassment of riches. If you have a library, it must be added to it; if you have not, you must procure it, for it is a library in itself.

In *Book-Collecting*, Mr. Percy H. Muir continues the series of "Letters to Everyman" which appeared in his previous volume on the subject. Much of the ground having been cleared, he is able to advance the beginner's footsteps somewhat more rapidly and to indicate fresh paths that are worth exploring. Not that this is a book for the beginner only; even the veteran book-hunter can read it with pleasure and profit. Mr. Muir is a book-seller by trade, which gives him wide experience and vast knowledge; but he is also a man of culture, who can write both gracefully and trenchantly. No less than Mr. Jackson, he is convinced of the joys that attend bibliophily, and whether he writes about the mechanics of bibliography, about books in auction rooms, about the financial aspect of book-collecting, or about the value of old Bibles, he never loses sight of the fact that he is discussing a hobby which has given intense pleasure, and not a little excitement, to tens of thousands of people in the past, and that has the same lure to-day. This is another essential volume for the book-man's bookshelf.